New Hyde Park Public Library
1420 Jericho Turnpike
New Hyde Park, New York 11040

EARLY NEW HYDE PARK

1665-1865

GARDEN CITY PARK

AND NEIGHBORS

CHARLOTTE HENRY

Hillside Public Library

INTRODUCTION

How do we learn about the history of some special area in which we are interested?

In recent years, we might hear the complaint that too many records are kept and that our privacy is sometimes invaded because of all the agencies that keep records. But what about the record-keeping of several hundred years ago? The people who came to this 'new' land fought a daily battle for survival. There were few who were literate, and books and paper were scarce commodities, so the story of our origins has been obscured by time and circumstance.

We are fortunate in that shortly after Hempstead (our first local settlement) was established, a Town Clerk was appointed who recorded town meetings, land sales and grants and appointments of officeholders.

We go back to these early records (1.); read the few books that contain written accounts of reminiscences, and depend upon early historians who had access to material no longer available to us.

Just as we begin to assemble a jig-saw puzzle, fitting and matching the pieces to complete a scene, so we take the information we can find from the past and attempt to create a 'picture' of our beginnings. Many pieces are missing, such as the Town Records of the first ten years of colonial Hempstead which were contained in "the mouse eaten book", which was apparently discarded by someone whose fastidiousness exceeded his social conscience. We can however, reconstruct enough of the past to give us a reasonably accurate picture of the land, the people and their way of life three hundred years ago.

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

INTRODUCTION

I - THE INDIANS

II - THE DUTCH

III - THE ENGLISH

IV - THE FIRST SETTLER

V - GARDEN CITY PARK

VI - SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

VII - END OF THE OLD BRIG

VIII - DEVELOPMENT OF JERICHO TURNPIKE

IX - THE LONG ISLAND RAILROAD

X - THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

XI - EARLY HISTORY OF NEW HYDE PARK

XII - LEGENDS

XIII - ADDENDA

NOTES TO THE TEXT BY CHAPTER

BIBLIOGRAPHY

CHRONOLOGY

FOREWORD

When the study of the community was included in the Grade School curriculum, it was evident that a written account of our history would be helpful to both the teachers and the students in our schools.

In 1973, I, as Historian of the Garden City Park PTA, began to research the beginnings of our school in preparation for the PTA's 40th Anniversary. In the course of examining the old Historians' books and other records and especially in conversation with long time residents who had played an active role in the school's development, so many interesting stories were revealed and repeated, that my 'exploration' just naturally expanded to include the history of Garden City Park and its environs.

It has been a delightful excursion into the past.

Since much of the research (in note form), was done more than a decade ago, I must ask the forebearance of anyone whose published material was used as a reference and not attributed.

I would particularly cite some of the people who contributed so much information about our early days, either in conversation or through correspondence.

The late Gourly Dyckman Rozycki
Alice Donahue
Anthony (Pat) Janosick
The late Albert Boardman
Bruce Bergbom
Elizabeth Clowes
Mildred Smith
Garden City Librarians
Margaret Swiader

The Honorable Marcus G. Christ
Viola Valentine
The late Theresa Chapman
Madie Peterson
Coe Seaman Clowes
Ernest Marshall
Madeline Smith
Hempstead Librarians

Their generosity in sharing records, information and reminiscences is deeply appreciated and enriches our community's heritage.

Perhaps others, who read this now, have photographs or memorabilia which they will add to the collection in the library.

THE INDIANS - I

Who were the inhabitants the colonists first met when they came to 'Long Island"? Most historians agree that the people called "Indians" were of Mongoloid origin whose ancestors crossed the Bering Strait from Asia to the North American Continent at least 25,000 years before Columbus' voyages. (2.) It was many more thousands of years before there were settlements here on the east coast. Tribes in different parts of the country would by this time vary so much in custom and life-style that their only bond was a common heritage.

When our local area was settled, there were between thirteen and sixteen tribles of Algonquins (a sub-group of the Deleware Nation), living in villages along the northern and southern coastal regions on the island they called "Paumanake". (3.) It is thought that the members of one or more tribes had established homesites some distance apart and came to be known by the name of their settlement.

At the western end of the island were the Carnarsies whose village was called Yemacah (meaning Beaver), apparently pronounced 'Jameco', and eventually anglicized to Jamaica. On the north shore were the Matinecocks (high land), and at the eastern end of the island's south fork were the Montauks (fortified place).

The three south shore villages most often mentioned in colonial records are the Mericocks or Merokes (bare land), the Marsapeagues or Massapeauke (great water land), and the Rockaways (lonely place).

The great chief or 'sachem' of the island was Wyandanch (4.) of the Montauks. This might account for the well defined path running erratically down the middle of the island from the East River to Montauk, trod perhaps by generations of braves going to meet in council and pay homage to their chief.

Each tribe had a leader, and the first mention of a local sachem is Tackapausha, one-eyed chief of the Marsapeagues, who played an important role throughout our early colonial history and eventually rose in position to become the spokesman for all western Long Island tribes.(5.)

Here the Indians lived in a region of great beauty and bounty. The rolling, rocky hills of the north sloped to a great grassy plain edged by forest groves. To the south, salt hay marshes fringed the white sand beaches of the mighty sea.

Great deer herds populated the woods and grazed in the meadows.ever alert to the danger of predators; wolf, wildcat and human. Here too were bear, fox, raccoon, muskrat, and otter. In the high plains grass nested quail, partridge, turkeys and a great variety of small birds, while along the southern beaches, cranes, geese, brants, teal and pelicans abounded. One writer exclaimed about the number of swans which "covered the bays and shores in white drapery." (6.) At certain times of the year, Sickrewhacky (Fire Island) was covered by the seal herds that came there.

Oysters, a foot across, were not uncommon, clams were eaten only when nothing else was available, and nearby streams were filled with trout. (7.)

Some conservation measures were apparently enforced even in those days of plenty. The Rockaway Indians extracted a promise from the first settlers in the village of Jamaica not to "cut down any tall trees where Eagles doe (sic) build their nests." (8.) Fines were imposed on anyone 'girdling' a tree. (9.)

Our local Indians scarified their faces and bodies which they also painted with red, yellow, white, blue and black markings, or when in mourning, totally black. They smeared their long, coarse black hair with grease. Usually they wore a piece of deerhide or elkhide around their bodies, and in winter fashioned a doublet (10.) of bearskin. Coats might be made of raccoon, wildcat, wolf, dog, fisher, squirrel, beaver and occasionally, turkey feathers. Leg and foot coverings were made of deerskin, elkhide or cornhusks. They twined black and white "seawan" (11.) around their heads, necks and waists. Red dyed deershair was fashioned into circlets for their heads and braided around their necks.

Indian homes on 'Long Island' were all constructed by the same method. Sapling poles were bent into intersecting arches until a round or oval shaped framework was completed. The structures were estimated to be from ten to twenty feet in diameter. After the poles were tied together, horizontal strips were attached. The frame was thatched with blue-vent grass (12.) placed in overlapping rows and sewed fast to the frame. A hole was left at the top, (permitting smoke from the centrally located fire-pit to escape), which was plastered with clay to render it somewhat fire-proof.

The oval, or 'long-houses', which were multiple family dwellings, would have rooms separated by partitions of wattle work (13.) and thatch. The door frame was arched and the door might be made of wood, skins or mats of grass.

Around the inside perimeter of the house, benches or couches with pole frames were constructed, beneath which goods were stored. In some instances, the floor of the dwelling was dug out, leaving an earthen shelf around the walls for bed, seat or table. (14.)

We know certainly, that corn was grown and was a mainstay of the Indian diet, and herbs and roots were used medicinally, but perhaps because 'gardening' and all the other domestic work was done by the women, little is known of what crops were cultivated. (Since the dealings of the white men were exclusively with the tribal leaders, and the Indians had no written language, hardly a mention is made of the women or children in historical references.)

Canoes were made by burning and digging out logs. Fishhooks were carved from bone and fishing lines were woven from a hemp-like fiber. Arrowheads and cutting tools were chipped from flint and one would speculate that basic household implements were improvised. These Long Island tribes were not noted for weaving or pottery making. Their unique 'Island industry' did however, bring them renown along the eastern seaboard of the continent.

With great expertise, these our Island predecessors, created the 'coin of the realm', wampum, which also enabled them to buy whatever they needed.

From the periwinkle shell they fashioned white wampum and the hard shell clam or quahog, was used to make the blue-purple (called black) beads. The dark wampum was twice as valuable as the white. Off island tribes referred to this place as 'Seawanhacky', (Island of shells.) Great stratified mounds of broken shells unearthed by recent archeologists were at first attributed to be the remnants of ceremonial feasts, but were eventually determined to be evidence of the first industry on our Island. Wampum was used for a while by our colonists, with six white or three black beads equalling one English penny.

Much of the hunting was done on the plains, and here, where we now live, the Indians would camp, setting up temporary wig-wams (15.) at the side of the aforementioned path, to stalk the wildlife that abounded.

(When the excavations were in progress for the new Holy Spirit Church in New Hyde Park and the Waldbaums' Shopping Center in Garden City Park, a young New Hyde Park Memorial High School student, Bill Palmer, who was interested in Archeology, found many arrowheads, cutting tools and pottery shards discarded by these early hunters.)

Certainly these were a relatively peaceable people - isolated from the mainland tribes - their needs adequately filled by the natural bounty of their island home; but they were also an ever-present menace to the white settlers. A total lack of understanding between the two cultures was probably the basis for most of the problems that arose.

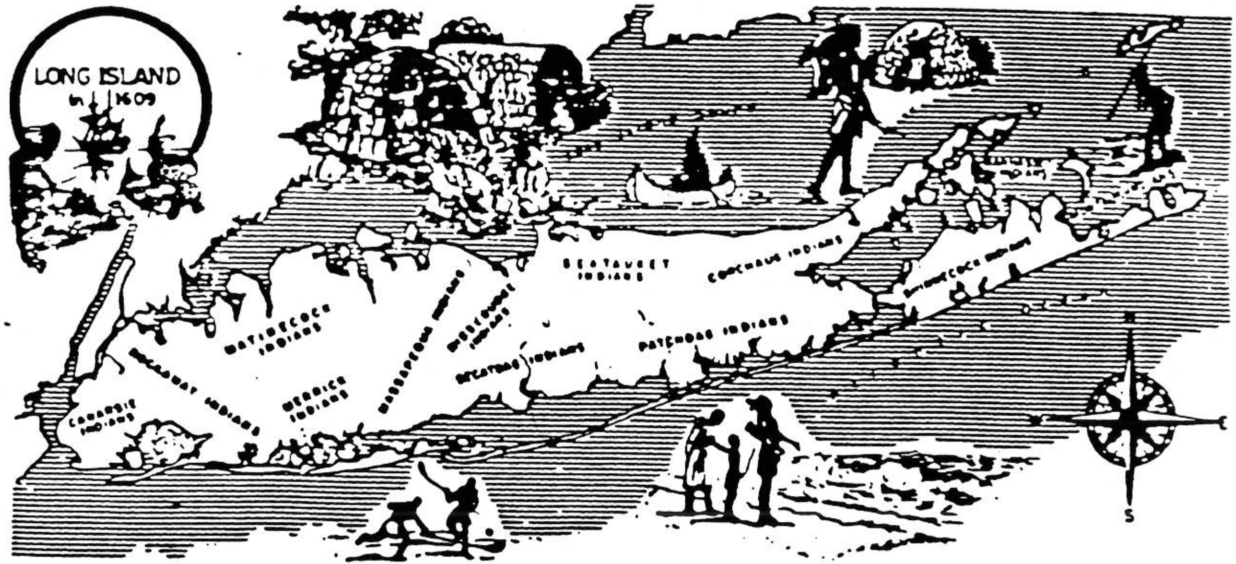
The colonists looked upon the Indians with contempt, disparaging their religious observances, their personal habits and even their diet. With no common language, the land sale agreements, written by the settlers were violated time and again. There are many accounts of the problems on both sides, but the Indians were ultimately disadvantaged to the point of extinction by the white man.

Daniel Denton, in a book published in 1670, wrote, "... it is to be admired how strangely they have decreast by the Hand of God since the English first settling in these parts... where the English come to settle, a Divine Hand makes way for them, by removing or cutting off the Indians, either by wars ... or by some mortal disease." (16.)

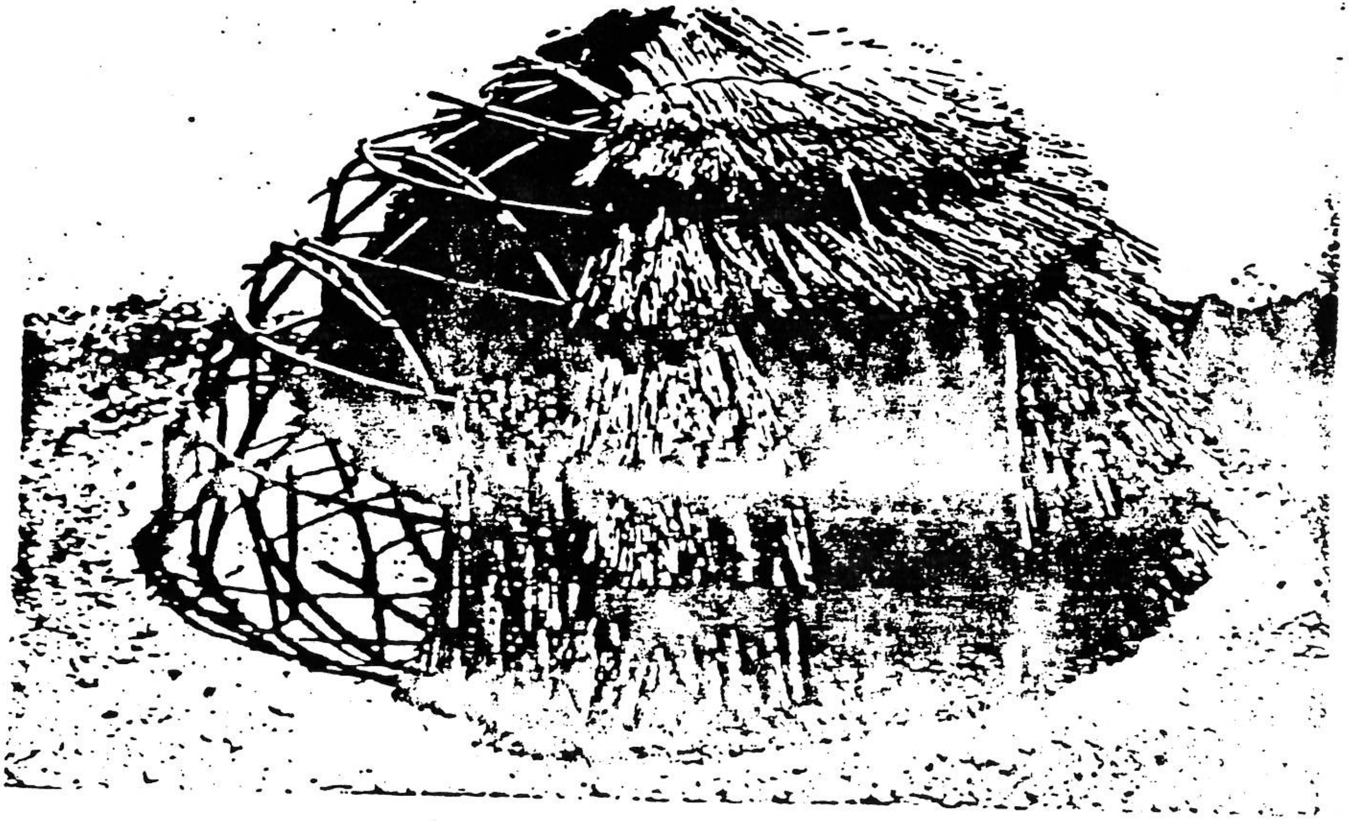
After a century of colonial settlement had passed , through intermarriage with whites and black slaves, it was estimated that there were practically no Indians of pure descent.

The last reference to Tackapausha, proud chief of chiefs, who met on several occasions with the Royal Governor of the Province, appears in the Town Records in the 1680's, when he brought to the Townspot the head of a wolf for the bounty. The Constable was called in to witness the payment, "... so that he might furnish no further annoyance." (17.)

Location of Indian Tribes on Long Island


LONG ISLAND
in 1609
SETAUKET INDIANS
CORCHAUG INDIANS
SHINNECOCK INDIANS
MATINECOCK INDIANS
NISSEQUOGUE INDIANS
MASSAPEQUA INDIANS
SECATOGUE INDIANS
PATCHOGUE INDIANS
ROCKAWAY INDIANS
MERRICK INDIANS
CANARSIE INDIANS
N
E
S

ILLUSTRATIONS REPRODUCED FROM OUR LONG ISLAND by GEORGE MANNELLA



The Long Island Indians Built Their Wigwams in a Dome Sh

THE DUTCH - II

In 1609, Henry Hudson, an Englishman employed by the Dutch, sailed into the bay of 'New York' and up the river which would one day be named in his honor. A year later, Dutch traders came to the Island of Manhattan to begin a profitable trade with the natives.

Five years after, Adrian Block who discovered Long Island Sound and Block Island, was granted a monopoly of the fur trade in the New Netherlands, as the territory was called. By 1621, the Dutch East India Company brought more settlers to the new land and in 1626, Peter Minuet bought Manhattan Island. (1.)

So the Dutch were firmly entrenched in the colony. Had it not been for inept administration and the greed of company officials, history might have been altered, but the Dutch demands for a wider measure of freedom and the growing hostility of the Indians who suffered terribly at the hands of Gov. William Kieft, opened the door to a new era.

The little settlement at Hempstead survived under Dutch rule for about twenty years. Although the Dutch government appointed local magistrates, collected taxes and "supplied ammunition, labor and commodities from Europe", (2.) they were left to run their community with a reasonable degree of freedom. We might wonder that a patent for the land was so easily granted for the Hempstead lands since just four years earlier, a band of Englishmen, under the leadership of Howe had been driven from their north-shore settlement even before they had finished building their cabins.

Apparently the expected emigration from Holland proved discouragingly small, so the Dutch governor liberalized his policies.

Although the story of Dutch rule in the colonies is depicted as tyrannical, creating bitter hostility, the relationship the Hempstead group had with the Dutch belied that reputation. Communications on both sides indicate tolerance and forebearance from the Dutch leaders and allegiance and admiration from the English. (3.)

There are probably several reasons for the attitude of the townspeople of Hempstead; first because the primary quest for that particular group, for whom Hempstead was the third settlement in the 'New World', was freedom of worship, and within the patent they secured, they were granted liberty to "exercise the Reformed religion which they profess." (4.) They were, and continued to be right up to the period of the Revolution, a particularly insular community, remote from their neighbors and largely self-sufficient.

The eventual capitulation of the Dutch to the English, after years of turmoil, was effected swiftly and peacably. The English had laid claim to all of Long Island in 1636, and by the time they decided to press their claim with force, the Dutch could not raise a defense and quietly surrendered.

THE ENGLISH

The assumption of power by the English was met with hope and optimism by the little group at Hempstead. The one great lack in their governmental structure under the Dutch had been their deprivation of representation in a general assembly, surely they could now anticipate being granted this coveted privilege.

In February of 1665, all of the neighboring Long Island and Westchester towns were instructed each to send two representatives to the Hempstead Townspot to meet with the royal Governor. Seventeen towns were represented. At this, the Hempstead Convention, boundaries were discussed, town names Anglicized and formally designated and sanction of the Duke's Laws was solicited.

It was immediately apparent that this was to be an oppressive and repressive government. Local representation was still to be achieved.

The judicial system established by the English provided for an Apellate Tribunal with the royal Governor presiding, which gave him, in effect, total control of the colony.

At the Convention, the Province was divided into 'shires'. Long Island and Westchester would be combined to form Yorkshire. This area was subdivided into three 'Ridings'. Suffolk County was the East Riding, Kings County, Newtown and westward the West Riding, and all the land between, including Hempstead, were designated the North Riding. (1.)

When the delegates returned to their respective towns with reports of what had transpired, they were met with derision and scorn. How could they have acquiesced to rules and regulations which granted them no measure of liberty?

It would be four years before the discussions and dissension was formalized in a petition to the Governor, but the answer gave them no satisfaction whatever.

In 1672, the Dutch, in an extension of an outbreak in Europe, sailed into New York harbor, and the English, totally unprepared, submitted. For a year the colony found itself under Dutch rule, but once again the English regained control.

Finally, in 1683, with the appointment of Thomas Dongan (2.), Fourth Royal Governor of the Province, a Charter of Liberties and Privileges was awarded to the long suffering colony; providing the people with a voice in in their government.

So at least in Hempstead, the English held dominion for one hundred years. Conservative, provincial and loyal, these people would one day pay dearly for their allegiance to the Crown, but for nearly a century, they prospered and more importantly, survived.

THE FIRST SETTLER

Once again, we go back to Hempstead to learn more about the first settler in our neighborhood (Garden City Park).

A small group of pioneers who had come from England, settled briefly in Massachusetts and then in Connecticut, were apparently still seeking an 'ideal' permanent residence. Reports of the great beauty of the island across the Sound filtered back to the little group under the leadership of the Rev. Richard Denton.

Denton assigned two emissaries, Robert Fordham and John Carman to scout the island and vested them with the authority to negotiate a land purchase with the Indian inhabitants if their findings were favorable.

The two men ferried across the Sound and set their sights for the opposite side of the island. Through the rock-strewn north hills they trudged until several miles inland, they reached a clearing which afforded a spectacular view. Spread before them, as far as the eye could see, stretched a great grassland prairie. (Later descriptions compared it in appearance to a great lake; tall blue-green grass moving in the breeze like gentle swells, with isolated clumps of darker foliaged trees resembling islands.) Enthusiastically, the two men forged on. Here was perfect pasturage for their few, but most important cattle and the abundance of wildlife which fluttered or scurried off at their every step, added encouragement.

They crossed the great plain and entered a lightly wooded area. Following a stream leaping with trout, they came to a spot where two streams converged, widening in several spots to sizable ponds. Here was a plentiful fresh water supply and a natural barrier to marauders. It seemed the ideal place for their new community.

Carman and Forham headed to the nearest Indian village to begin negotiations to purchase a tract of land which would become the Hempstead Township. (For well over a hundred years after it was settled, the area now called North Hempstead was part of Hempstead.)

It is surmised that the two men spent part of the winter of 1643-44 in the area, but we do know that in April of 1644, the group of fifty or so who would be our first local settlers, carting or carrying all their worldly possessions and leading their few precious livestock, headed toward the site of their new home.

The plains land, renewing itself after its long winter dormancy, heralded spring with a panorama of wildflowers. (Violets in such profusion that they would be for many years, a 'tourist' attraction. Even now, in undisturbed garden spots, clumps of wild violets remind us of their past glory.)

Reaching the townsite, they would immediately prepare some temporary shelter and almost as quickly, some land would be cleared for planting. Here in the wilderness, they must provide for all their needs.

Probably the first permanent structure would be the palisaded Meeting House which would serve as common shelter, House of Worship, and refuge in the event of danger.

Just survivng those first few years would take extraordinary energy and determination.

The division of acreage would be an early priority and each householder would be granted large tracts on which to settle and become 'shareholders' in the great plain.

One would expect that, considering constant reports of Indian attack and reprisals in other sectors, they would group together for security, but a few chose homesites in deep forest clearings and some on the remote edge of the plain. JUST SUCH A HARDY INDIVIDUAL WAS "OUR" FIRST SETTLER! It is claimed that in 1660 a small house was built near the north border of the plain alongside the old Indian path. (1.) (This would one day be within the boundaries of what we call Garden City Park.)

How interesting it would be to know more about the origins of our first citizen, but his identity, and that of his descendants for the next century, are lost in antiquity.

Again, because we have the Hempstead Town Records, we can reconstruct generally, a picture of life in the very earliest days of the settlement.

It is difficult for us to imagine how simply these people lived. They would, by necessity, be almost totally self-sufficient and there was little time to provide even basic comforts. They dressed in clothing made from hides or from wool, spun and woven from the fleece of their sheep. Shoes and caps were fashioned from animal skins. No doubt they would keep their somber English style attire for use on the Sabbath, but their everyday attire would have resembled that of their Indian neighbors. These were pioneers in every sense of the word.

Nothing was wasted. When an animal was slaughtered, the flesh was eaten, the hide was tanned and the suet was used for tallow candles and soap. Bones would be returned to the earth for fertilizer or used to fashion implements. Feathers from their geese filled mattresses and pillows. Bees supplied honey to supplement the loaf sugar they would have to import. Tool handles and farm implements were contrived from the lumber of the trees they would cut.

Perhaps a treasured chest or trunk had survived the many moves this Hempstead group had undertaken, but with few exceptions, they would have to build the spare furnishings and even carve out the wooden trenchers from which they ate.

Their homes were basic, often one room with a sleeping alcove and at first, the roofs were thatched. Incredibly, chimneys were made of wood and clay making the threat of fire a constant concern. By law, everyone was required to keep a ladder, high enough to reach the roof, and a bonfire was not permitted without the knowledge and consent of neighbors.

Settling and establishing this new colony was certainly a joint enterprise and the townspeople helped each other, often bartering one skill for another. Most transactions in fact, consisted of trading goods for services and commodities. From the colonists' point of view, their cattle was their most valuable possession and one may find in the Town Records, a transaction in which a cow was given in payment for a house and many acres of orchard and garden.

Cattle and sheep prospered on the lush plains grass. By 1665, the few flat-sided, lean flanked cows the settlers had brought with them had grown to a herd of three hundred, and by 1683, well over a thousand head of cattle grazed on the pastures. The sheep industry grew more slowly, but eventually it too became a major factor in the colony's economy.

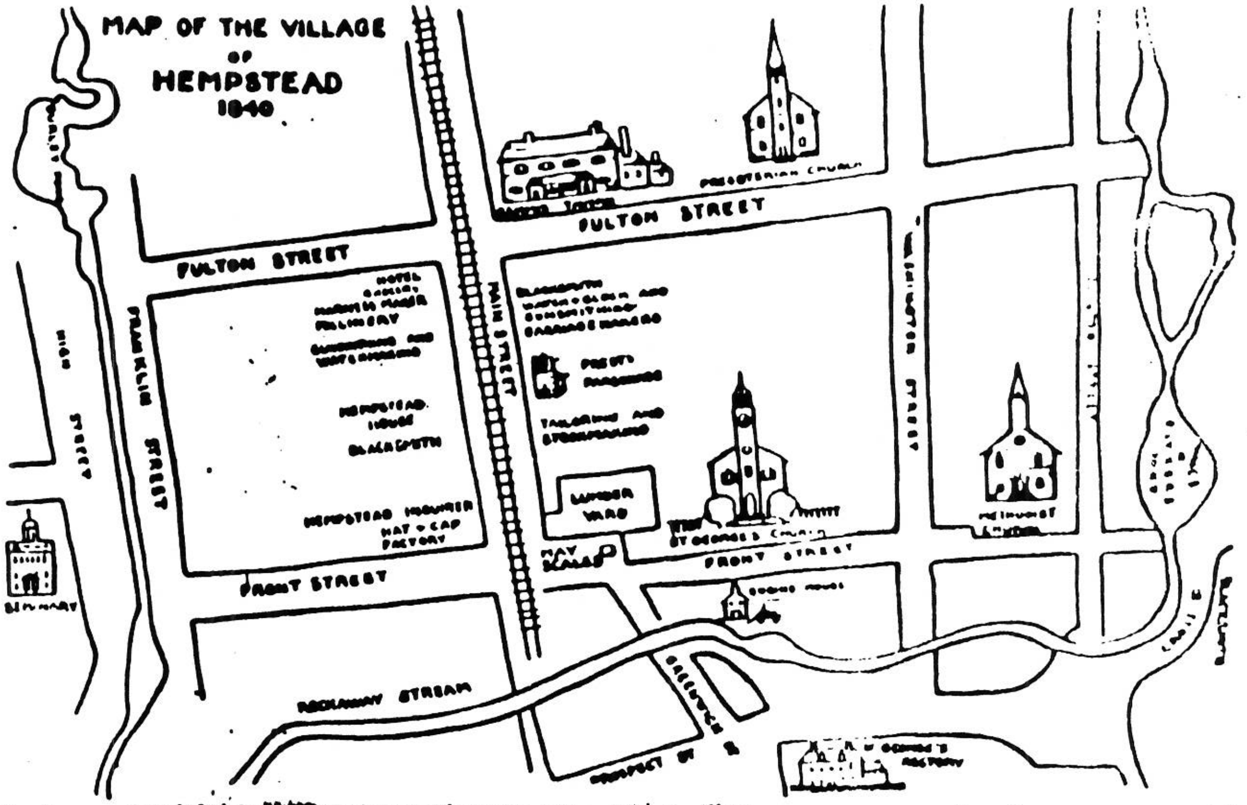
Some of the town appointments centered around the cattle and sheep tending. For the first twenty five years, the cattle roamed the plains with a herdsman responsible for their welfare who would also keep his charges away from carefully cultivated crops.

Gradually, great areas were fenced and the respective owners could keep their herds under control, but the sheep were free to roam all summer and returned to town in a great drive in October which culminated in the ritual called 'sheep-parting'. The sheep were directed into pens by their owners, each being identified by an ear-mark which consisted of notches, latches, nicks and holes in various places on the sheeps' ears. Careful resords were kept of these marks and examples can be found in the Town Records.

Through the years, as the sheep-parting ceremonies attracted large numbers of participants and onlookers, peddlars plied their wares, refreshments were sold and entertainers lent a carnival atmosphere to the occasion. Aside from the festivities attendant to the horseraces, this was one of the rare times that the mundane existence of the early townspeople was brightened a bit.

HEMPSTEAD VILLAGE-"THE TOWNSPOT"

Ever since 1643 when John Carman and Robert Fordham purchased a tract of land from the Indians, the area where the Village of Hempstead now sits has played a central part in the development of the Town. Called "The Townspot" by colonial inhabitants, it was a charming location. On the southern edge of the Hempstead Plains several streams converged and cut an irregular course through the new village; to the south lay the forest. Although the map (right) dates from 1840, there was very little difference between Hempstead Village of 1790 and the village of 1840. Without a doubt, farmers came to gawk at the new horse drawn trolley car on Main Street when they delivered their hay weighed in at the scales near St. George's Church. Today the hay scales are gone, as is Sammis Tavern, torn down in the early 1900's. The present Presbyterian Church was built in 1846 on the site of the previous building. The Methodist Church still stands, as does St. George's Church and rectory. Burley Pond and Pines Pond have been filled in. The Hempstead Town Governmental complex was built on the site occupied by the engine house on Front Street.


MAP OF THE VILLAGE
OF
HEMPSTEAD
1840
FULTON STREET
FRANKLIN STREET
HIGH STREET
MAIN STREET
FRONT STREET
HOTEL
MILLINERY
HEMPSTEAD HOUSE
BLACKSMITH
HAT & CAP FACTORY
SEMINARY
ROCKAWAY STREAM
PROSPECT ST
BLACKSMITH
TAILORING AND
LUMBER YARD
HAY SCALES
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
FULTON STREET
ST GEORGE'S CHURCH
FRONT STREET
ENGINE HOUSE
WASHINGTON STREET
METHODIST CHURCH
ST GEORGE'S RECTORY

GARDEN CITY PARK

Our village of Garden City Park has had quite a few names or designations. If we knew the name of the first settler who lived here in the late Seventeenth Century, we might find that the locality was referred to as "name of first settler's place", but it was not until 1786 that we can pick up the thred of our history.

After the Revolutionary War and the occupation of Long Island, a new courthouse was needed. The County of Queens chose a spot in the "geographical center" of the County which proved to be on the north side of Jericho Turnpike between what is now Marcus Ave. and Herricks Road. (1.)

Nearby stood 'our' first little house built in 1660. The property for the courthouse was owned by Nathaniel Townsend and the little house was operated by its owner, John Halyrod, as The Three Tun Inn, a stopping off place for travelers along Jericho Turnpike and for those who had business at the Courthouse.

We have two descriptions of the area shortly after the courthouse opened. The historian, Prime, wrote, "It is nominally the capital of Queens County... but from the time of its erection, it has remained a solitary building, there being not more than 5 or 6 small dwellings within a half mile or more." A Gazateer of New York State, 1813, describes it as "THE VILLAGE called QUEENS COURTHOUSE or NORTH HEMPSTEAD ... upon an almost naked and barren heath."

Although there were but few people who lived here in those early days, there was plenty of activity in our village, for the courthouse was used as a meeting place for many organizations. The Queens County Medical Society was formed there in 1806 and in 1815, members of almost every religious denomination met to begin the Long Island Bible Society.

The County Agriculture Society met in 1819 and at an exhibition of produce and livestock in 1820, "... there were more people assembled than ever before was witnessed in the County ..." (2.)

Our most illustrious and accomplished early resident, Timothy Clowes, was born in Hempstead in 1787. He was a fifth generation "American", being the great, great grandson of Samuel Clowes who was the first lawyer on Long Island. His great grandfather, Gerardus, was the architect of Rock Hall in Lawrence. (Now a museum.) The home of his father, Joseph, has been preserved and is used by the Chamber of Commerce of Hempstead, located on Denton Green in the heart of town.

Timothy Clowes graduated from Columbia College in 1808; became a clergyman and teacher and opened a seminary in Hempstead in 1817. He apparently bought a large tract of land near the Courthouse and for many years our village was called CLOWESVILLE.

The first map we find designating land ownership was published in 1859. It shows about fifteen houses, only two of which, as far as we can determine, still stand.

One of the two houses erected before 1859 and still in existence, is most likely the very charming old house near the point of land formed by the juncture of Denton Ave. and Marcus Ave. (just immediately behind the Water District property.) The house that stands on the corner of Pubins Lane and Marcus is also among the oldest, but apparently it was preceded by another dwelling which burned down. The second identifiable building, obviously serving the community in its same capacity is now called the "Garden Inn", on the south side of Jericho Turnpike opposite Central Ave.

A map of 1873, no doubt prepared a few years before its actual publicaction, (for it was again in 1873 that many changes took place), shows little variation from the 1859 map, with just a few properties changing ownership. Most of the houses shown on the two maps existed well into the Twentieth Century.

We backtrack a bit to 1869, when an event took place that would influence the growth, development and even the name of our little village.

By this time, Hempstead was a thriving village and the seat of the Township, but the plains, to the north of the town, were becoming a wasteland. Always common-lands, the Freeholders and Electors were enabled, by the Act of 1867, to sell their common lands, or any portion thereof. Two years after the legislation was passed, Charles T. Harvey offered Forty Two Dollars and acre for a large tract of the plains. A meeting was called to determine the will of the landholders, but before the meeting took place, a counter-offer of Fifty Five Dollars an acre was proferred by Alexander Turney Stewart, one of the richest merchants in the world. The amount was so much higher than the apparent actual value of the land, that Stewart's intentions were suspect. It was rumoured that the land was to be developed for tenements and "public charities". Obviously the offer was accepted, and Stewart owned 7,170 acres of the Hempstead Plains. (A price that would today buy one substantial house and property.) (3.)

Stewart's plans for the model village he conceived, were implemented, and the beautiful Garden City is the realization of his dream.

A close friend of Stewart's, Benjamin Hithcock, must have been strongly influenced by the venture, for a few years later, Hitchcock bought another large tract of plains land just to the north of Stewart's acquisition.

His plans, or perhaps his resources, were apparently less grand than Stewart's, for Hitchcock's development was certainly not as impressive as that of his friend. The houses Hitchcock built were substantial but modest in size and style. People who bought the properties became immediate participants in a "lottery" whereby seven of the houses being built would be given free and clear to their owners. No doubt offered as an incentive to prospective buyers, Hitchcock made good on his promise and a few of the 'free' houses still stand today. (4.)

Seen as an adjunct to the Stewart landholdings and most certainly taking advantage of the already prestigious community of Garden City, Hitchcock's development was called GARDEN CITY PARK.

Most of the Hitchcock property was developed as farmland. Homeowners with relatively small plots (what would now be about one square block), would raise livestock and crops sufficient for their own needs and some for marketing. Large landholders hired both local and outside help to operate their farms. The Dyckman and Clover Dairies were both situated on the south side of the Turnpike.

There was one small general store owned by a family named Moore, just across the street on Central Avenue from where our school is now. The building burned down many years ago.

The first school in New Hyde Park was probably established in the very early 1870's. The building, now used for the Sunday School of the Baptist Church on New Hyde Park Road, was originally attributed to have been built in 1894, but we have since learned of children, born in 1873 and thereabouts, who attended that school throughout all their grade-school years. (See Chapter VII, Schools and Education.)

There were few changes in the last two decade of the Nineteenth Century. In the spring the land came alive and the farmers were busy from dawn to dusk. Wagons lumbered along the Turnpike, carrying produce to the western markets (Jamaica, Brooklyn), but the turn of the century brought events that marked the beginning of a new era.

Garden City Park residents had a ringside seat when aeronautical history was made. In 1911, the area bordered on the north by the railroad tracks, running south to Stewart Avenue, east from Roxbury Road and west to Tanners Pond Road, was the site of the Nassau Blvd. Airfield. A grand carnival was held along the stretch of Nassau Blvd, just to the east of the field, to celebrate its opening.

In the fall of that year, Earl Ovington was sworn in as Airmail Pilot #1 by Frank Hitchcock, Post-Master General. A temporary mail station was set up at the field and Ovington took off in his Bleriot Monoplane, making the round trip to Mineola several times to drop the bags of mail. Cheering spectators heralded each successful mission. (5.)

It is hard to imagine, as Supersonic jets roar overhead, that just within this century, their forerunners were frail, skeletal structures with fabric covered wings and rubber-tired, wire wheels and that their time aloft was measured, with awe, in minutes.

Chosen for the Second International Air Meet in America, twenty small hangars were built at the field's edge and spectators came from far and wide to witness the miracle of aviation. Plainly visible from all points in Garden City Park were the large box-kites with suspended inflated dummies, sent aloft to determine wind speed and direction. Lacking the most basic instruments, aboard or on the ground, the courage and daring of these pioneers is wonderful to contemplate.

Used for only a year or so, as real estate development moved northward from Garden City, the field was moved to the Hempstead Plains Aerodrome, (later, Roosevelt Field.)

From 1910 to 1920, a few more homes were built in Garden City Park and surprisingly, during that period and for a time thereafter, a number of homes were moved from one location to another. Two houses on the west side of Central Ave. between First and Second Streets were built on Jericho Turnpike and later moved to their present location. When the school's addition was to be built (mid-1930's), two houses which stood on land now used for the school parking lot were moved. (6.)

Although Garden City Park was still sparsely populated, the years after World War I again saw many changes. Many of the people who came from Brooklyn and New York City to work on the local large farms, (many of them recent immigrants) were offered the opportunity of buying property. Paying Two or Three Dollars a month, they would, after a few years, own the land and build their own homes. Now, in many instances, their great-grandchildren attend school in Garden City Park.

Peddlars still plied their trade, servicing homeowners with merchandise not available locally. A few little stores and a couple of hotels were maintained along the Turnpike and at one time there was a store in the large house on Third Street across from the schoolyard and also in the small house on the north-east corner of Third and Central

We had two dairy farms, Clover and Dyckman Dairies operating south of Jericho. Several carpenters in town built some of the older houses and on the north side of Sixth Street about 100 feet east of Central Ave. in an excavated area about 50 x 150, (so deep that the roof of a large shed-like structure was level with the adjoining road), cement blocks were manufactured. (7.)

By 1923, parents in Garden City Park felt that it was time to have a local school for their children and they petitioned the School Board to acquire property. (See Chapter VI - Schools and Education.

In 1925, an additional little flurry of real-estate development occurred when the Spanish-type houses with stucco exteriors and tile roofs were built on First and Second Streets just west of Nassau Blvd. They reportedly sold for Nine thousand Dollars, a very high price at the time and unfortunately, several of them were lost through foreclosure with the advent of 'The Depression'.

The 1930's were relatively uneventful, except for the addition being built on the school. The area remained rural with many tracts of open land. The school was the focal point of the community; the meeting place of local organizations as it is today.

The harsh reality of the country at war was felt perhaps earlier in Garden City Park than almost anywhere else. On New Year's Day morning, in 1942, residents were awakened with the almost certain horror that they had been bombed! An explosion rocked the earth, walls cracked and windows were shattered. A column of smoke, visible for five miles, rose from the sandpits south of Hillside Avenue and west of Denton Avenue. A bomber plane from Mitchel Field had crashed, killing all aboard. (8.)

Nine young men from this small community lost their lives in the war and it was a saddened community which saw the end of the war and the begining of a new era.

Plans postponed by the war, now many young people were ready to resume normal lives and developers of real estate had a ready market.

In 1947, the Garden City Park Civic Association was formed, and its Board and members continue to be ever protective of our community.

After the War, Garden City Park, relatively close to the city and with large tracts of undeveloped land, was an attractive site for new housing and in 1949, rows of Cape-Cod houses, ideal for young families attracted buyers quickly. The increase in population in that one year was the greatest since the village began.

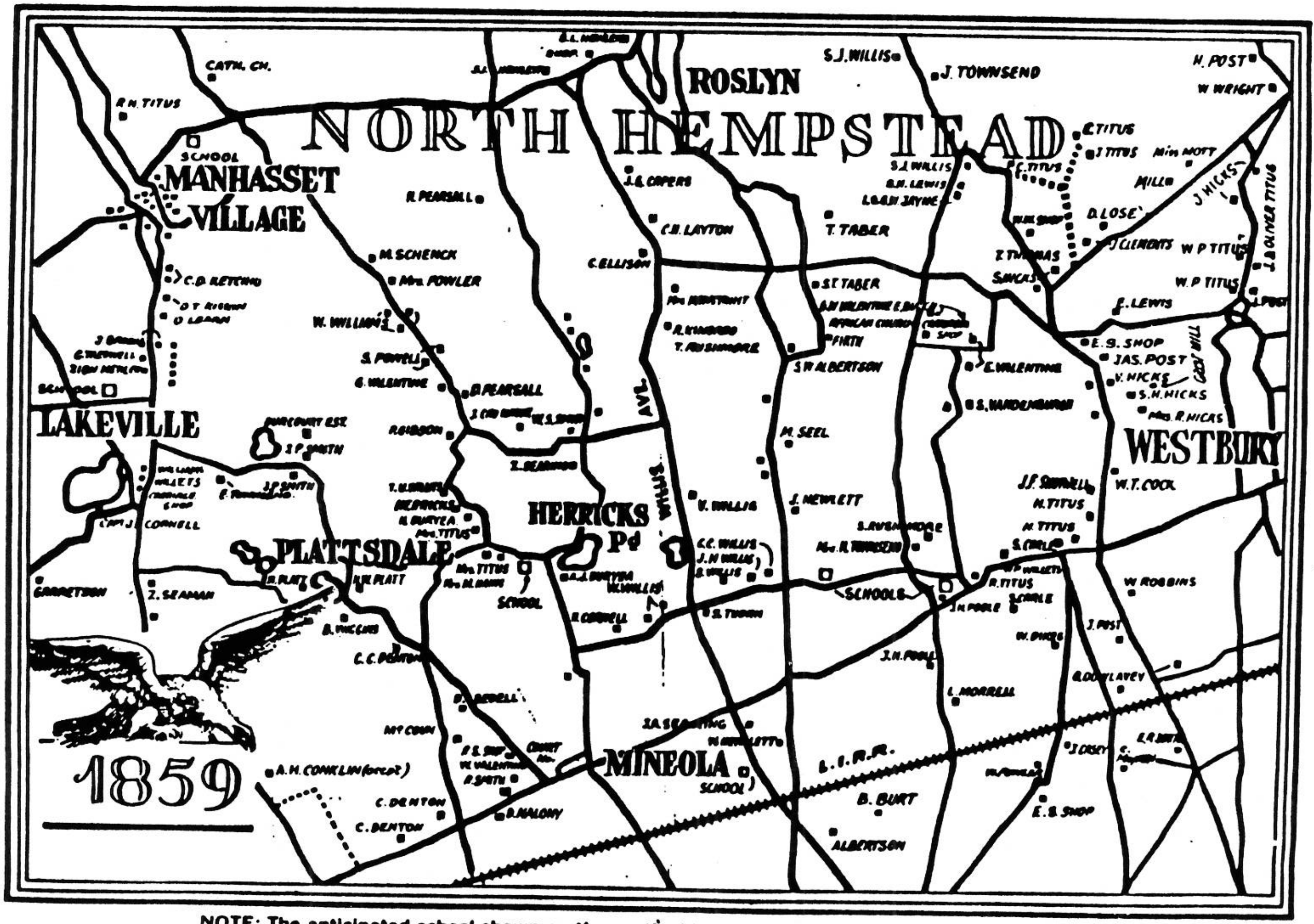
Throughout the 50's and 60's, it seemed as if every available lot was being built upon. Storm sewers were laid along Denton Avenue and the road surface upgraded. Gradually some of the 'eyesores' along the avenue were removed and it is now, for the most part, a presentable, commercial thoroughfare. The woods between Marcus Avenue and Herricks Road gave way to a modern development with attractive homes.

By 1956, New Hyde Park had its own High School and the once rustic, sparsely settled area had become a typical modern American community.

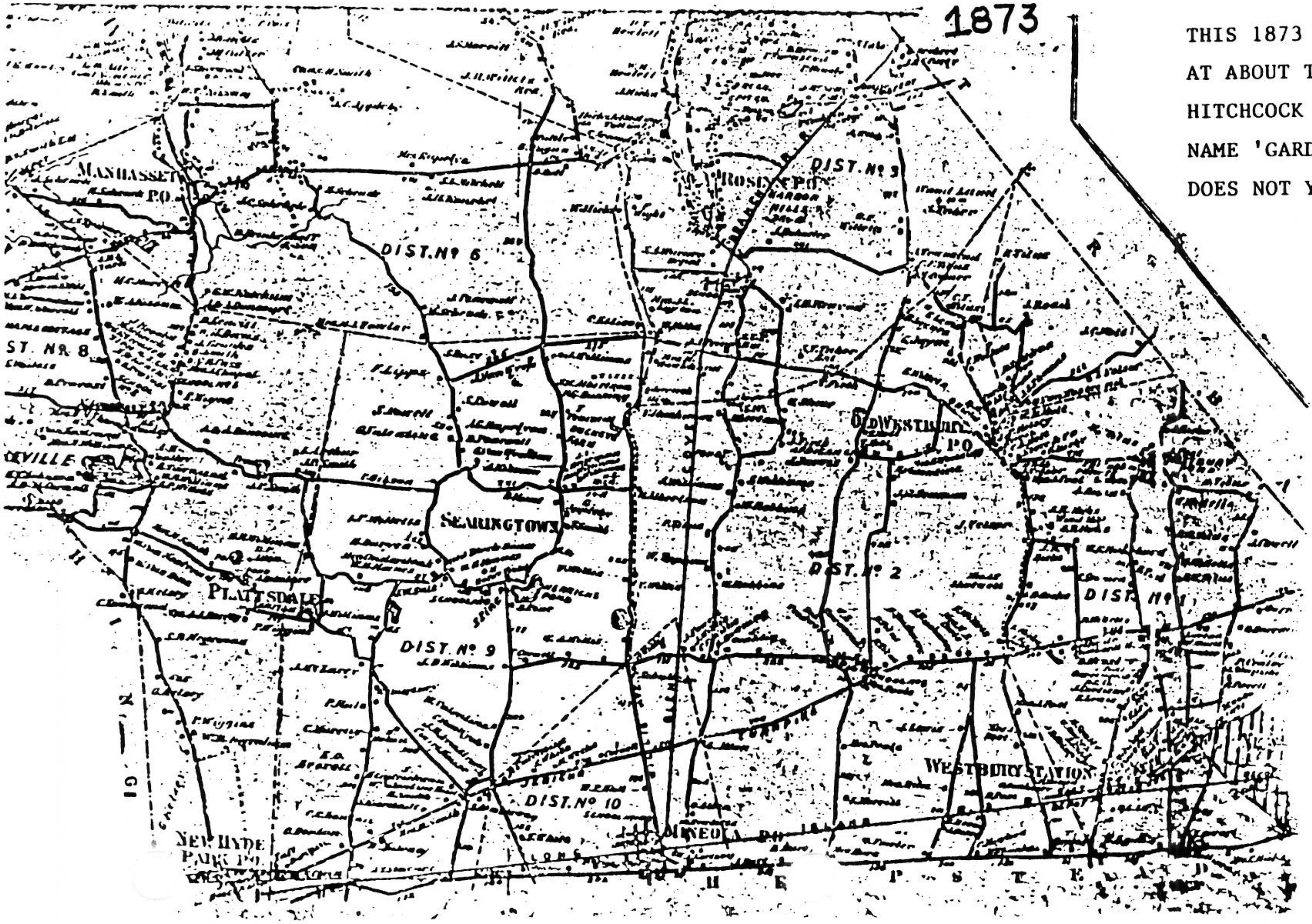
In the 60's, two modern shopping centers were built within our boundaries, filling the last somewhat undeveloped tracts, and at last, we didn't have to travel to another town for shopping.

As the 70's approached, so did our anticipation of the nation's Bicentennial celebration, and by the time that special year arrived, activities were in full swing to observe the anniversary. (10.) As hundreds of people gathered for special events, and the neat rows of houses proudly displayed the flag,one might have paused to reflect on the humble beginnings of our village and its first resident who lived here, alone, three hundred twenty years before.

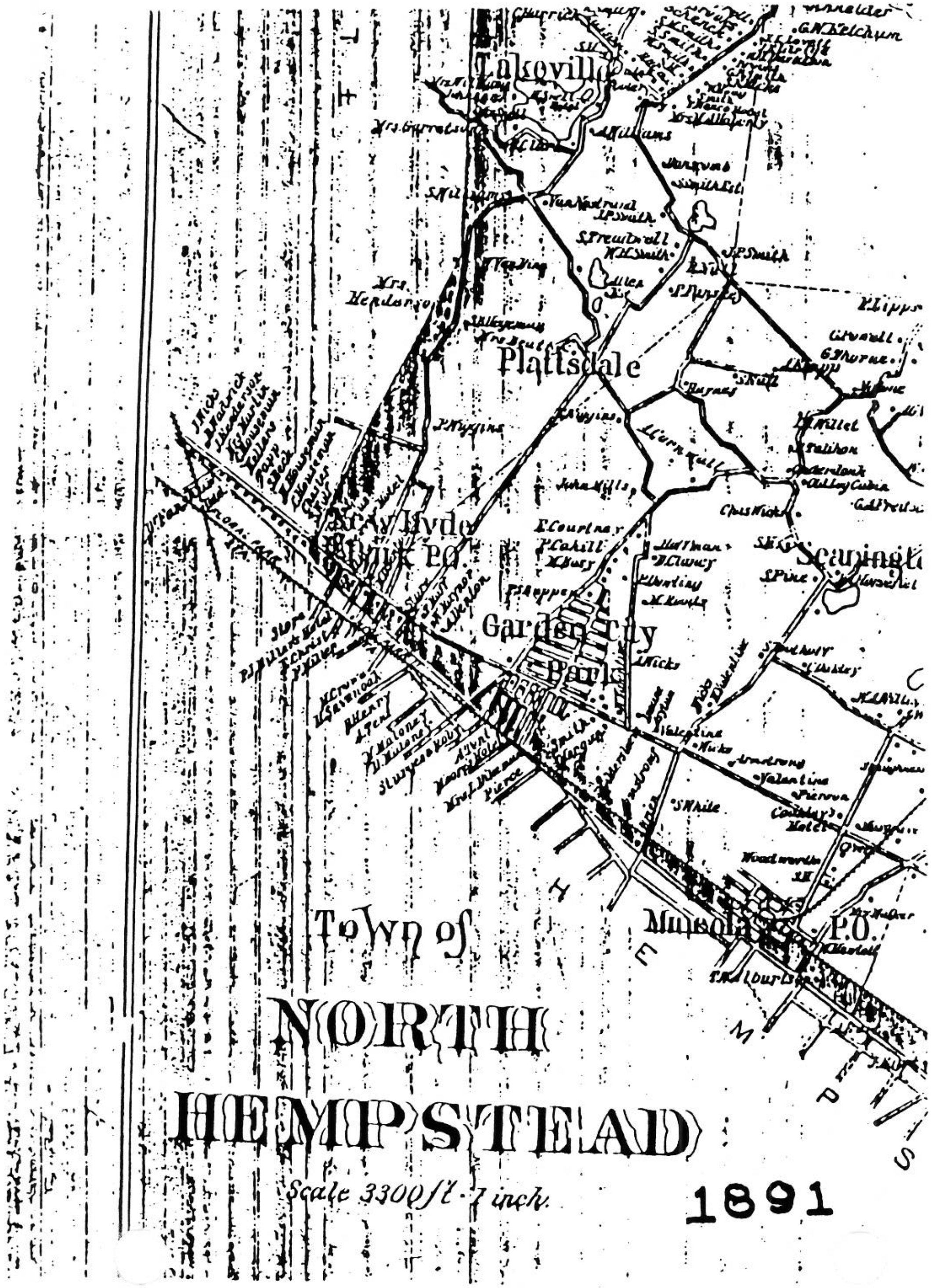
THE EARLIEST MAP WE FIND OF OUR AREA. FEW OF THE FAMILIAR ROADS HAD BEEN LAID OUT. NOTICE THAT THE DENTON FAMILY WAS WELL REPRESENTED.


NORTH HEMPSTEAD
ROSLYN
MANHASSET VILLAGE
LAKEVILLE
PLATTSDALE
HERRICKS
Pd
MINEOLA
WESTBURY
1859
SCHOOL
SCHOOLS
L.I.R.R.
CATH. CH.
R.N. TITUS
S.J. WILLIS
J. TOWNSEND
H. POST
W. WRIGHT
E. TITUS
J. TITUS
Mrs. MOTT
MILL
J. HICKS
D. LOSE
J. CLEMENTS
W.P. TITUS
J. OLIVER TITUS
E. LEWIS
E.S. SHOP
JAS. POST
V. HICKS
S.H. HICKS
Mrs. R. HICKS
GRIST MILL
W.T. COCK
W. ROBBINS
J. POST
R. TITUS
H. TITUS
J.S. CAPERS
C.H. LAYTON
C. ELLISON
T. TABER
S.T. TABER
AFRICAN CHURCH
S.W. ALBERTSON
E. VALENTINE
M. SEEL
J. HEWLETT
V. WILLIS
C.C. WILLIS
J.H. WILLIS
S. WILLIS
S. TOWN
J.H. POOLE
L. MORRELL
B. BURT
ALBERTSON
E.S. SHOP
R. PEARSALL
M. SCHENCK
Mrs. FOWLER
W. WILLIAMS
S. POWELL
G. VALENTINE
B. PEARSALL
ROBSON
C.D. KETCHAM
J.P. SMITH
Z. SEAMAN
GARRETSON
J. CORNELL
R. PLATT
W. PLATT
B. HIGGINS
C.C. DENTON
A.M. CONKLIN
C. DENTON
C. DENTON
B. MALONY
J.A. SEAMAN
AVE.
WILLIS
WILLETS
R. CORNELL
T. SEAMAN

NOTE: The anticipated school shown on the north side of East Williston Avenue was never built.

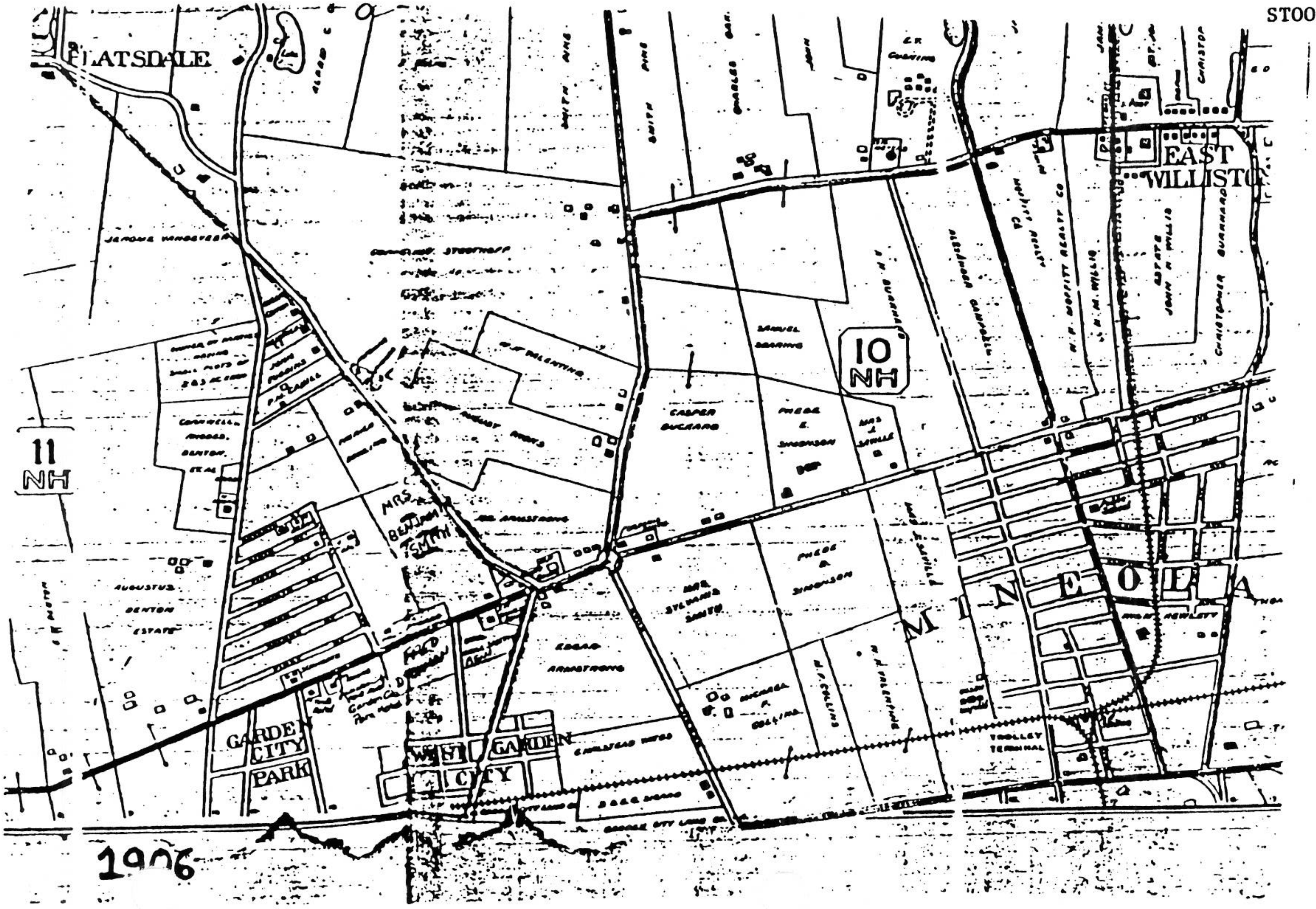

1873
MANHASSET P.O.
DIST. No 6
ROSLYN P.O.
DIST. No 3
ST. No 8
VILLE
SEARINGTOWN
PLATTSDALE
DIST. No 9
DIST. No 10
MINEOLA
NEW HYDE PARK P.O.
OLD WESTBURY P.O.
DIST. No 2
DIST. No 1
WESTBURY STATION
TURNPIKE
H E M P S T E A D

THIS 1873 MAP WAS CREATED AT ABOUT THE TIME OF THE HITCHCOCK PURCHASE. THE NAME 'GARDEN CITY PARK' DOES NOT YET APPEAR.


Lakeville
Plattsdale
New Hyde Park P.O.
Garden City Park
Searingtown
Mineola P.O.
THE HEMPSTEAD PLAINS
Town of
NORTH HEMPSTEAD
Scale 3300ft. 1 inch
1891

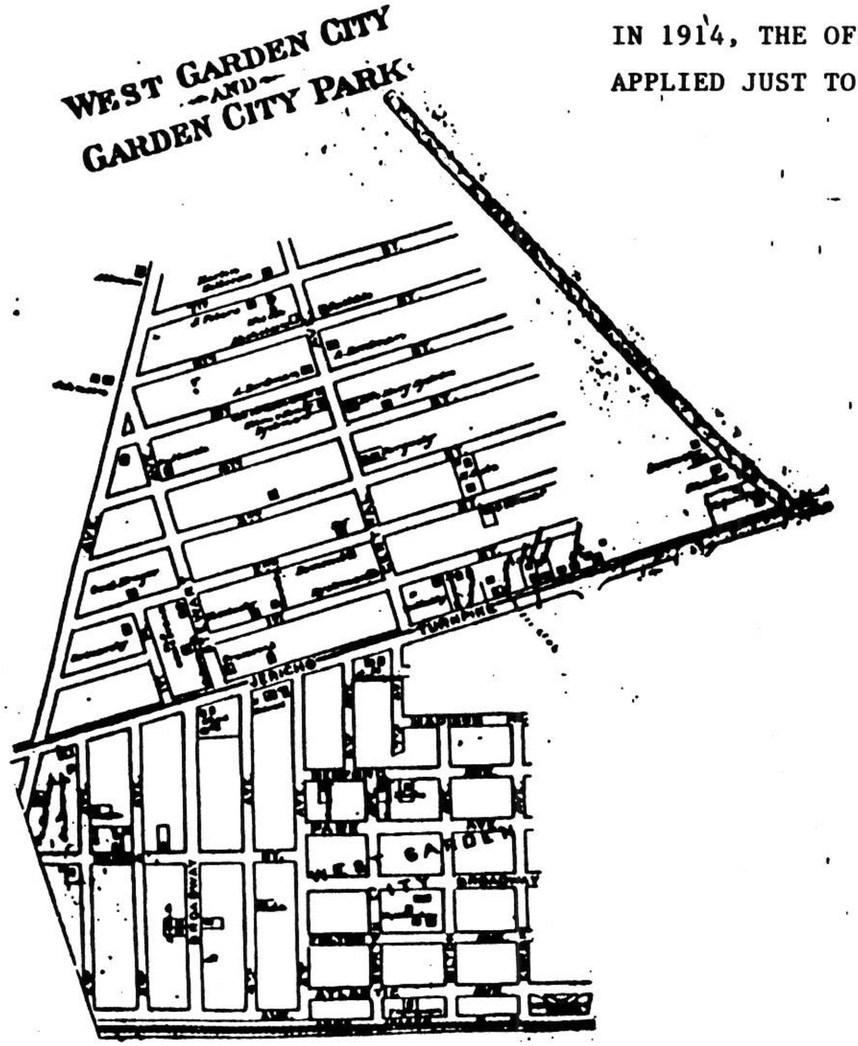
ON THIS MAP OF 1891,WE SEE THAT THE STREET PATTERN OF GARDEN CITY PARK, NORTH OF JERICHO APPEARS TO BE MUCH AS IT IS TODAY. ACTUALLY, ENTIRE SQUARE BLOCKS WERE INDIVIDUALLY OWNED FARM PLOTS. NOTICE THAT BY THIS TIME, THE OLD COURTHOUSE WAS BEING USED FOR THE COUNTY'S INSANE ASUYLUM.

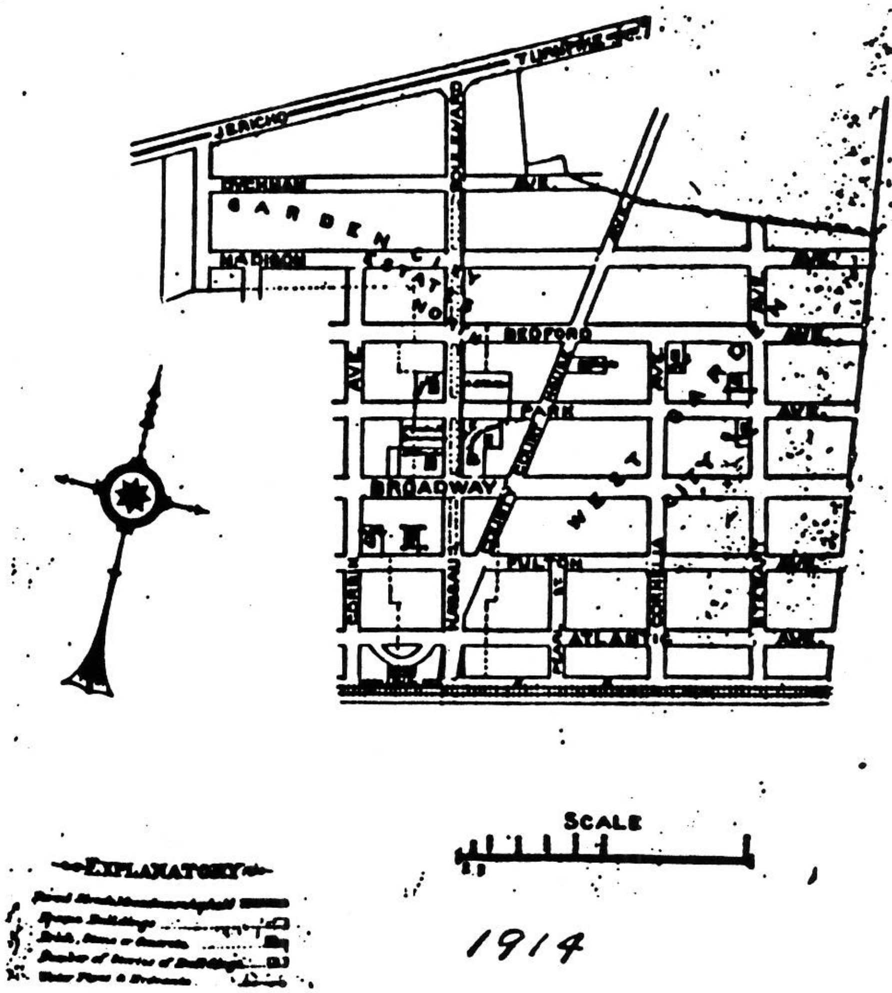
1906- LARGE TRACTS OF LAND WERE OWNED BY INDIVIDUALS. THE AUGUSTUS DENTON ESTATE, WEST OF DENTON AVENUE, COMPRISED 100's OF ACRES. THE EDGAR ARMSTRONG PROPERTY, SOUTH OF JERICHO WAS THE SITE OF 'OUR' OLDEST HOUSE (1660), AND ACROSS JERICHO, ON THE PROPERTY OF JOSEPH ARMSTRONG, STOOD THE OLD COURTHOUSE.


FLATSDALE
EAST WILLISTON
10 NH
11 NH
MINEOLA
GARDEN CITY PARK
WEST GARDEN CITY
MRS. BENJAMIN SMITH
AUGUSTUS DENTON ESTATE
EDGAR ARMSTRONG
JOS. ARMSTRONG
SAMUEL SEAMAN
CASPER BUCKARD
PHEBE A. SIMONSON
MRS. SYLVANUS SMITH
MICHAEL F. COLLINS
SMITH PINE
CHARLES BAR
CHRISTOPHER BURKHARD
JOHN M. WILLIS ESTATE
N.P. MOFFITT REALTY CO
TROLLEY TERMINAL
1906

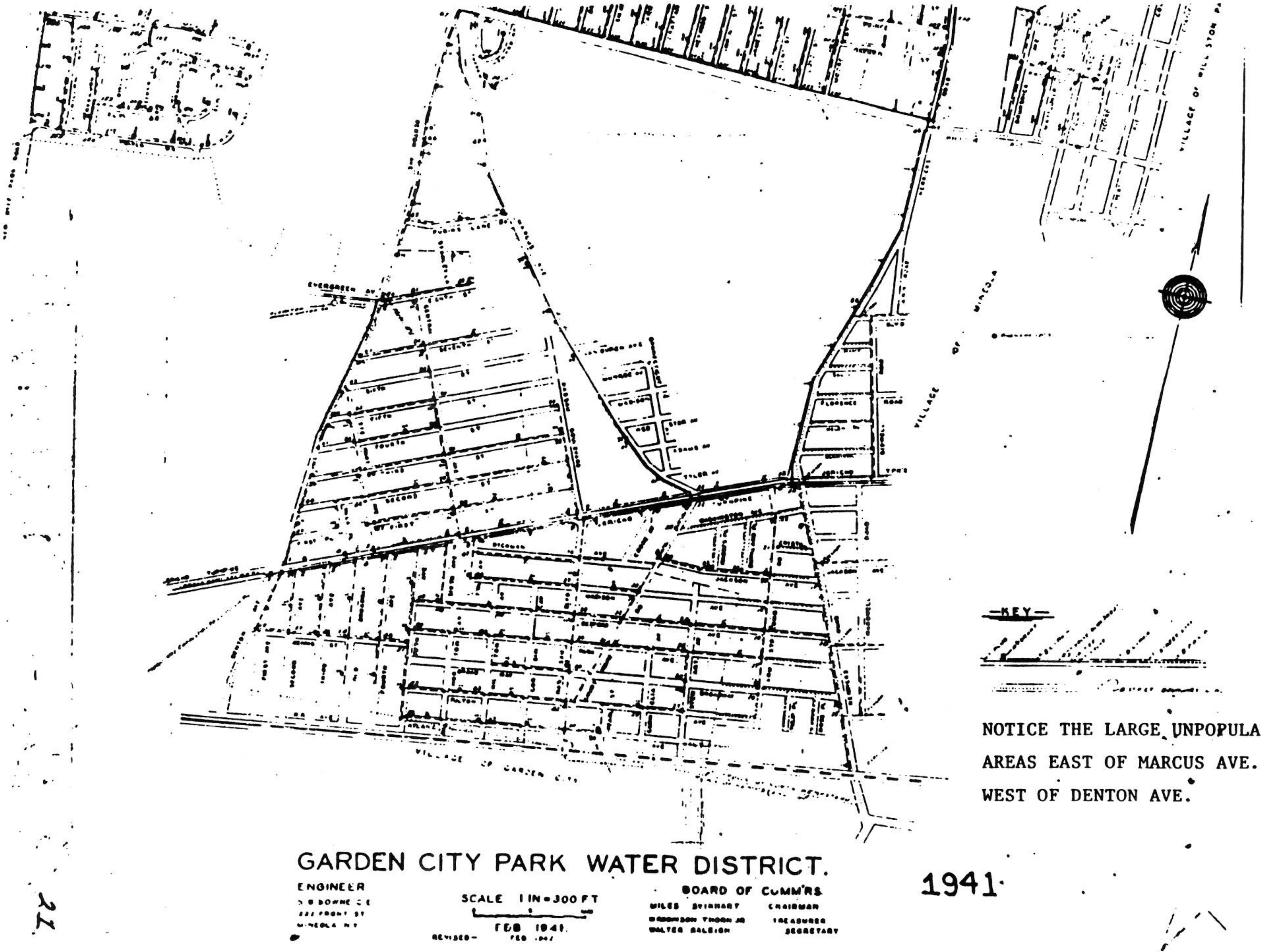
GARDEN CITY ESTATES NORTH

IN 1914, THE OFFICIAL DESIGNATION OF GARDEN CITY PARK APPLIED JUST TO THE AREA NORTH OF JERICHO TURNPIKE.


WEST GARDEN CITY AND GARDEN CITY PARK
JERICHO
TURNPIKE
BROADWAY
AVE
WEST GARDEN CITY

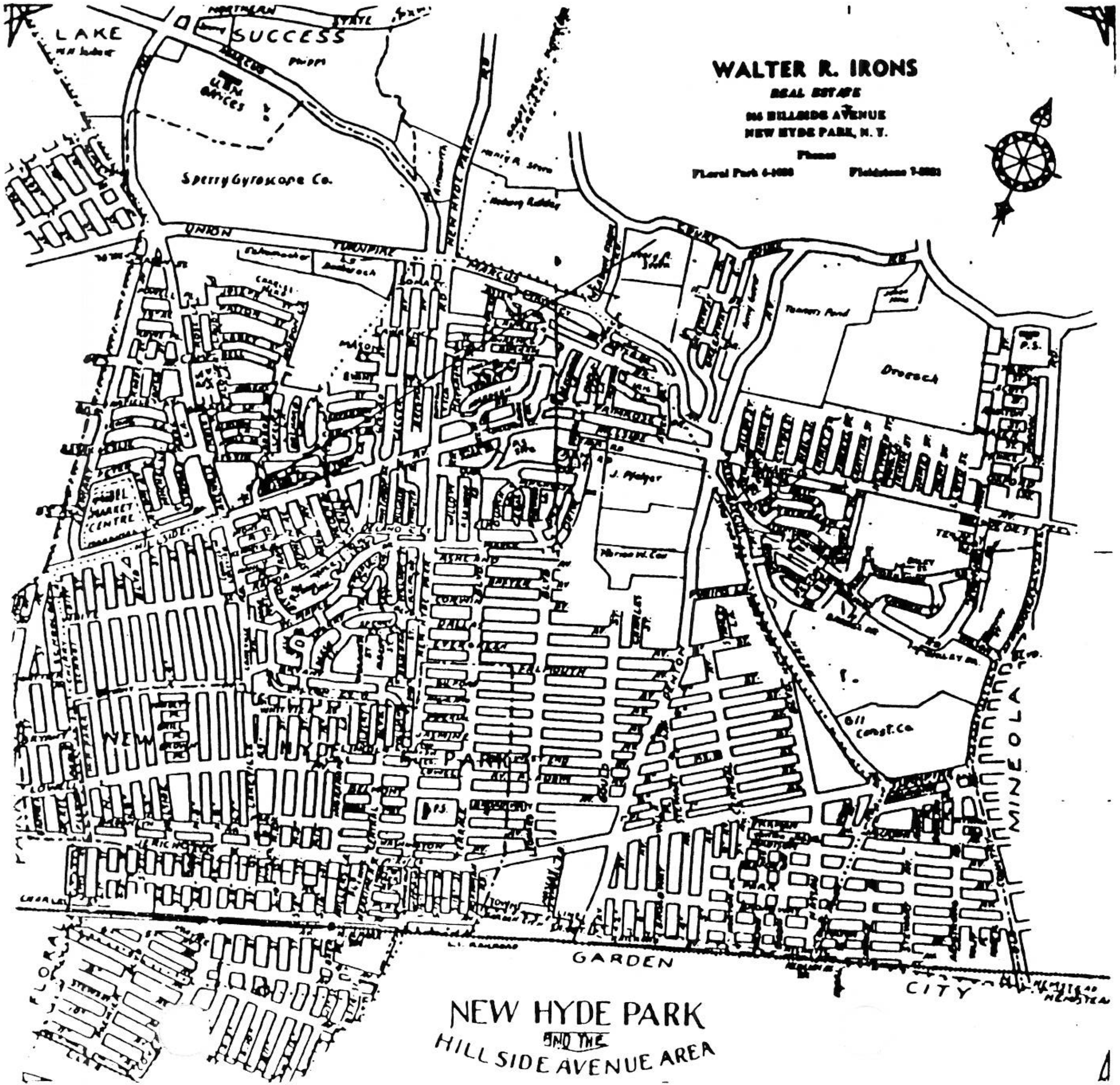

JERICHO
TURNPIKE
BOULEVARD
MADISON
AVE
GARDEN CITY ESTATES NO. 2
BEDFORD
PARK
BROADWAY
FULTON
ATLANTIC
EXPLANATORY
SCALE

1914

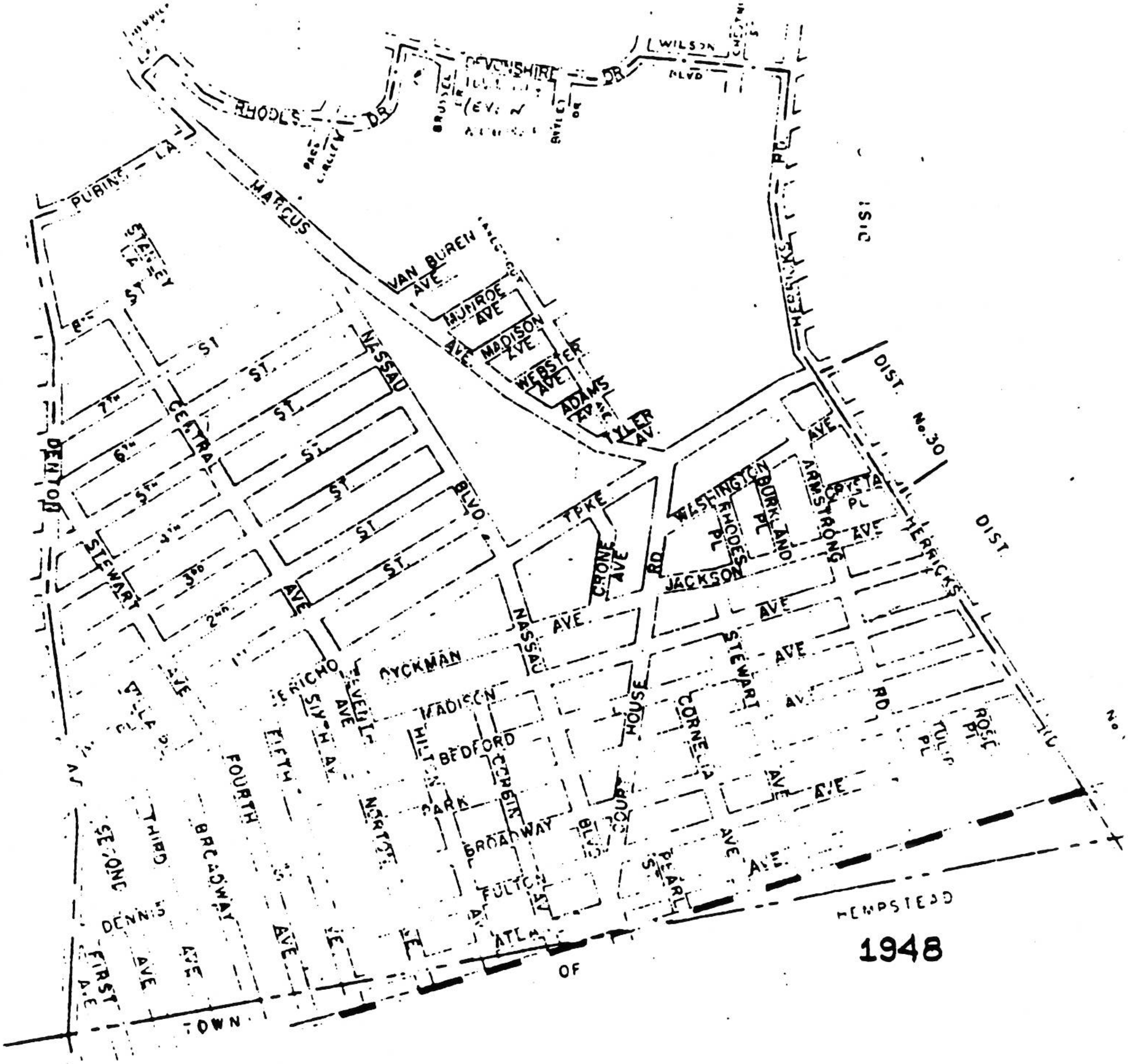

VILLAGE OF WILLISTON PA
VILLAGE OF MINEOLA
VILLAGE OF GARDEN CITY
EVERGREEN AV
KEY
GARDEN CITY PARK WATER DISTRICT.
ENGINEER
SCALE 1 IN = 300 FT
FEB 1941.
REVISED—
BOARD OF COMM'RS
CHAIRMAN
TREASURER
SECRETARY

NOTICE THE LARGE UNPOPULATED
AREAS EAST OF MARCUS AVE. AND
WEST OF DENTON AVE.

1941


LAKE SUCCESS
NORTHERN STATE
U.N. Offices
Sperry Gyroscope Co.
UNION TURNPIKE
NEW HYDE PARK RD
MARCUS
WALTER R. IRONS
REAL ESTATE
HILLSIDE AVENUE
NEW HYDE PARK, N. Y.
Phones
Floral Park
J. Pfalzer
Droesch
P.S.
MARKET CENTRE
HILLSIDE
NEW HYDE PARK
Oil Const. Co
GARDEN CITY
MINEOLA
FLORAL
NEW HYDE PARK
AND THE
HILL SIDE AVENUE AREA

UNDATED MAP @ LATE 40'S. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST, IN THE NW SECTOR, IS THE LOCATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS WHEN IT CONVENED AT LAKE SUCCESS.


1948
DEVONSHIRE DR
RHODES DR
WILSON BLVD
PURINE LA
MARCUS AVE
VAN BUREN AVE
MONROE AVE
MADISON AVE
WEBSTER AVE
ADAMS AVE
TYLER AV
NASSAU BLVD
CENTRAL AVE
STEWART AVE
DENTON
7th ST
6th ST
5th ST
4th ST
3rd ST
2nd ST
TPKE
JERICHO
CRONE AVE
WASHINGTON AVE
RHODES PL
BURKLAND PL
ARMSTRONG AVE
CRYSTAL PL
HERRICKS RD
JACKSON AVE
DYCKMAN
MADISON
HILTON
BEDFORD
PARK
BROADWAY
FULTON
ATLANTIC
HOUSE RD
CORNELIA AVE
STEWART AVE
TULIP PL
ROSE PL
SECOND
THIRD
BROADWAY
FOURTH
FIFTH AVE
SIXTH AV
SEVENTH AVE
FIRST AVE
DENNIS AVE
DIST. No. 30
DIST
TOWN OF HEMPSTEAD

IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE ON THIS MAP, ISSUED BY THE GARDEN CITY PARK WATER DISTRICT, THAT NASSAU BLVD. HAD NOT YET BEEN EXTENDED TO MEET MARCUS AVE., AND THE AREA BETWEEN THE TWO, NORTH OF JERICHO TPKE. WAS UNDEVELOPED. THIS PROPERTY WAS OWNED BY THE RHODES FAMILY. FACING ONTO JERICHO TURNPIKE WAS A GOLF DRIVING RANGE.

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION VI

It is difficult to imagine, in our highly technological society where computers are installed in elementary schools and teachers use closed-circuit television to supplement classroom studies, that just a few hundred years ago, education was available only to the privileged few. Once again we go back to our communal roots in the little Hempstead settlement to trace the evolution of our schools.

In 1658, a liquor tax was imposed for "education of poore orphants or other poore orphants children." There is nothing on record to indicate that any program was instituted. The school-master, in 1672, complained that after serving a year, he was unable to collect his salary. (1.)

By 1707, four acres were set aside in Hempstead for a school house. Two years later the building was rented to a private individual.

The minister of the church pleaded for a subsidy from the Society for the Propogation of the Gospel. He wrote, "The young grow up in miserable ignorance, and I cannot catechize for want of a school master to teach the children to read." Several years later he complained, "... the children are as wild and uncultivated and unimproved as the soil was when their forefathers first had it." (2.)

His plea was apparently unheeded, for he was allowed Ten Pounds (about $50.) yearly, which was supplemented by the fee of Five Shillings ($1.25) per quarter by the more affluent families. From over one thousand children, including slaves, in the Township, thirty or forty attended this school. A group of concerned parents complained that the school master was "... a very detriment ... and hindrance to our youth."

People of means would send their children to boarding schools or employ tutors, but the average citizen had little choice but to depend on the inconsistencies of 'public' education.

There are "... sum reeders sum Righters and sum Sypherers." So read a report from the school master at Hempstead in 1723. (Town Records.)

In 1769, the aforementioned society again contributed to a mission school, but the master has "... indeed one great Difficulty to Struggle with, and that is the Humour of the Parents who, unacquainted with the proper Regulation of a School, and unused to restrain their children themselves, do not sufficiently attend to the necessity of a decent subjection." (3.)

Throughout the years just before the Revolution, several teachers had to be buried at public expense, and during the seven year occupation , every public building, including the school house, was commandeered to quarter British troops or torn down for firewood.

Not until 1850 was the first public school opened in Hempstead. It boasted four classrooms and provided all levels of education.

During the last half of the 19th Century, a school house would be provided for the Herricks area (attended by children from our town.) The first school in New Hyde park was pictured in an early publicity booklet from the village and captioned "erected 1894". In discussion with Gourly Dyckman Rozycki, I learned that her mother, Ellen Nystram Dyckman, born in 1873, attended that school for her elementary education. A contemporary of Mrs. Dyckman, Tom Guilfoyle, who lived on Central Ave. between 6th and 7th Streets, also attended that school. Obviously, the school was standing before the 1894 date. A textbook in Mrs. Rozycki's possession used by her mother was inscribed "Hyde Park", so apparently the locale continued to be called "Hyde Park" after its official designation by the Post Office as "New Hyde Park". (See Chapter XI, Communications.) A poem written by Tom Guilfoyle in later years (See Chapter XII, Early New Hyde Park), describes the first school in our area with great poignancy.

Until 1878, there was no distinction locally bewteen elementary and secondary schools, but in 1897, the Regents System was adopted and a license for an academic department was issued to the school at Hempstead by the New York Commissioner of Education. (4.)

The Board of Education of School District #11 of the Towns of North Hempstead and Hempstead was organized in June of 1905. The first meeting was held in Joseph Kiesling's Nassau Hotel, now the Nassau Inn.

"In September of 1906, the School Board Clerk was instructed to write to each applicant for a position in our school, as teacher, that the salary paid is $45.00 monthly repectively, and also ask each applicant if they have any ability in playing piano, and also write Miss Mary Van Dine of New Hyde Park to the same effect." (5.)

The need for additional teachers was prompted by the erection of a new school building on the South West corner of New Hyde Park Road and Jericho Turnpike in 1907, and on September 10th of that year, a new district was formed. Now we would be known as Union Free School District #5.

Children from New Hyde Park and Garden City Park would attend school in that building for many years. Graduates who numbered less than a dozen on the average, and who wished to continue their education, would travel to Jamaica, or board the trolley which ran along Jericho Turnpike and transfer at Mineola to the line which took them to Hempstead High School.

For many years, the population in Garden City Park was so small, that it wasn't feasible to build a village school, but in 1923, a group of parents from Garden City Park asked the Board of Education for an appropriation of $5,450., to purchase land for a school. The land purchase was approved, and in January of 1924, the board wrote for architectural sketches for an eight room brick building. In February, the actual transfer of property was begun, but in April, a proposition to spend $125,000. for the building was voted down.

In 1925, the new Hyde Park Road School was opened, and Garden City Park children were still leaving their village to attend school, but apparently undaunted by the first veto of their proposal, a new request for $75,000 to build a school was submitted and approved. An additional $12,000. for a temporary structure was also allocated.

A four room, wooden school building was erected on the South-West portion of the school property, and used while construction of the brick building was underway.

The school budget for 1924-1925 was $30,000., and the tax rate was $1.80. Applications for a janitor for the Garden City Park School were being accepted, the salary offered, $840. per year. The principal's report, issued in February of 1925, refers to the Garden City Park School; "The teacher reports an enrollment of 52 in the First Grade with ages ranging from 6 to 10 years, inclusive. Moreover the conditions there are rather unique in other ways; many children had no school training prior to the latter part of November, and a few are obviously getting their first training in the use of the American tongue. ... The teacher wants the class divided and to have half-day sessions."

The new brick school building was ready for occupancy in early 1927 and the temporary wooden building stood until 1930 when the School Board advertised a meeting to purchase additional ground for the school and to dispose of the wooden building.

Voters at the 1930 meeting included names still familiar to us today.

Walter Boardman
Lillian Boardman
Adam Petry
Anna Ford
Ellen Dyckman
Pauline Peterson
Frederick Willis
Louise Willis
Andrew Janosick
Lydia Savage
Ed Halloran
Katherine Halloran
Alexander Savage
Charles Donahue
Nellie Boardman
Walter Hogg

The basement of the new brick building was used for a small cafeteria, Physical Education area (in the hallways), and homemaking classes. For outdoor activities, an empty lot on the South-West corner of Third Street and Central was utilized. The Kindergarten Room was half the size it is now with the second part used as the Principal's Office. Children attended classes here through the Sixth Grade and finished their elementary school years and graduated from the New Hyde Park Road School.

In 1935, the first PTA of the Garden City Park School was organized and soon the need for additional space was recognized. William R. Bowie, principal, spent much of the summer of 1936 preparing a draft of specifications for equipment in the new proposed addition.

(How well I remember the wonderful stories Mr. Bowie would regale PTA groups with in the '50's. It summoned a picture of a typical rural little town as he described having to shoo the neighbor's cow away from the front of the school, or talked about the goats grazing along Central Avenue. Especially amusing was his recital of checking attendance, finding many absentees, and going from farm to farm to coax parents to free the children from their chores so they could attend classes.)

In June of 1937, formal dedication ceremonies for the addition to the school heralded a new era in Garden City park. Finally, the children would attend Grades 1 through 8 in their own community. Now a Gymnasium and Auditorium permitted many activities heretofore impossible. In June of 1938, the first Commencement Ceremonies were held in the Garden City Park School. "The beautiful auditorium was tastefully decorated with palms and floral decorations ... The program opened with orchestral selections by the school orchestra. ... This occasion was the first in the history of the District on which a school orchestra had played for its own Commencement." (6.) The first graduating class presented the beautiful red maple on the front lawn to the school as its parting gift.

William R. Bowie, principal of the Garden City Park School served in the Navy for two years in the early forties and the interim principal was Mr. Shertenlieb. The war had a drastic effect on education. New vistas had opened with an improved technology and alliance of people from all walks of life in a common cause, expanded horizons and created new areas of interest and endeavor. Men who might never had left their home towns had traveled all over the world. North Africa, Europe and Asia were no longer remote spots on a map - they had been there! Women assumed greater responsibility as a viable work force. Never again would we be the insular, provincial people we were just a few years before. Not only were we awakened to the opportunities opening to us, but to the realization that education was the key to fulfillment. People were more involved and more vocal, acknowledging and accepting the responsibility of good government, on all levels, that was theirs.

There's an old adage to the effect that 'the more things change, the more they remain the same'. Some of the issues of the late Forties and early Fifties were those which we address today. Reading back in the Historian's books from that period, we learn that the PTA inaugurated after-school programs which (according to local precinct reports), were most effective in diminishing delinquency. PTA programs included, "Teen-Age problems"; " Nutrition for the Pre-School child"; "The Effects of TV and Radio upon the child".

With the expanded facility, the school now became the focal point of the community. From 1938, when the PTA sponsored a 4H group, and during the was when a Red Cross Chapter met there to prepare bandages and dressings to be sent overseas. On through the years, the Civic Association, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and later, the PBC all met there. Of course, the auditorium overflowed with spectators and participants for special assemblies, Phys. Ed. demonstrations etc.

With the growth of population in the late 40's, space again became a problem. Over 80 children were registered for Kindergarten in 1955 and a second teacher was appointed to help with the large classes.

When Loren Evory, the principal who replaced William R. Bowie after his retirement, left for another assignment, we were delighted to welcome Joseph Suriano as our new principal. Mr. Suriano was well acquainted with our school and our children, since he had been the boys' Phys. Ed. instructor prior to his appointment in 1958.

Just two years earlier, our new Junior-Senior High School opened its doors to Garden City Park - New Hyde Park youngsters, and our school once again was a K through 6 facility. We were still struggling with overcrowded conditions in the lower grades however. The 1959 Kindergarten enrollment was so large that three sessions of Kindergarten were held each day, with teachers having but 20 minutes between classes to 'recover' and prepare for the next group.

It became evident that some action would have to be taken. The options discussed were rezoning, conversion, (a portable trailer equipped with classrooms was discussed), and transportation of students to another school. In the interim, the cafeteria was used as a classroom in addition to the two existing basement classrooms, the Library on the 2nd Floor was converted to a classroom and the basement Art Room was vacated in favor of the Library.

Since the Manor Oaks - William R. Bowie School was underutilized, Garden City Park students were bused there for 6th Grade classes for the next several years.

In 1970, a new proposal to bus our Sixth Graders to Hillside Grade School, met with vehement disapproval. Once again, modifications were made in our building including emergency exits in the basement classrooms and Cafeteria.

The school district was renamed in 1973, now to be called the New Hyde Park - Garden City Park Union Free School District.

Decentralization was a heated issue in 1974, but after scores of meetings, the proposition was defeated.

Now, in 1986, the decentralization issue is again under discussion, and sadly, the prospect of closing one of our elementary schools because of low enrollment, is rumoured.

A personal reminiscence best sums up, I think, what the Garden City Park School has meant to our community. Throughout the Bicentennial year, I had prepared, in the basement Art-Music Room, an exhibit of photographs, documents, artifacts and memorabilia for the children and the community. We called it our 'Mini-Museum'. So many of our former and long-time residents had contributed to our display, that we decided to thank them with a special afternoon program, held in the 'Mini-Museum'. We referred to the occasion, in the planning, as an "Old Timers' Tea", but were quickly reminded that perhaps that wasn't too tactful, so it became a "Special Guests Tea." (How I wish I could encapsulate those few hours and share them with you!) People who hadn't been in our school in thirty or forty years, and many who hadn't seen each other for as long, came together for one of the most delightful, warm occasions I've ever been privileged to share.

School was in session when we held the 'Tea', and at the same time, a Pre-School group was meeting in the building. Of course the young parents of our PTA sponsored both programs. Here, on one afternoon, we had people from every spectrum of our community. From 4 year olds to many folks in their 80's. A wonderful memory, and very indicative of what our school has meant to Garden City Park residents through the years.

END OF "THE OLD BRIG"

(AN ARTICLE PRINTED IN THE BROOKLYN TIMES -1894)

There is an old frame building situated about a mile north of the Long Island Railroad tracks near Mineola (1.) and within the boundaries of the Town of North Hempstead that has for years been an object of interest to travelers on the railroad by reason of its peculiar style of architecture and its tall windmill. Few among the transient visitors to Long Island were there who knew that this same building, with its square belfry rising above its roof, had done service in the Government of Queens County for 106 years (2.) -first as the county Court House, and then when the growth and prosperity of the county demanded a building more pretentious in appearance and with greater capacity, it was again mustered into service as the home of the county insane patients. For a period of ninety years the courts of Queens were held in this building; the prisoners were arraigned, acquitted or convicted as the circumstances of the cases might have been- some to go forth as free men and women, while others were led away either to their death or to a longer term of imprisonment in one of the State institutions.

Then came the change, when the Sheriff and his charges, the court and Judges moved to the present Court House at Long Island City. For one year the old building remained vacant, and after some time it was repaired, enlarged and to some extent remodeled and utilized as a County Insane Asuylum. For nearly sixteen years it was used as an asuylum, and the removal of the patients to the State Hospital at Poughkeepsie again leaves the building vacant so far as its being a county institution is concerned.

The future of the "Old Brig" as it is familiarly known among the older residents of the county is yet in abeyance. One rumor is that it will be remodeled and opened as a summer hotel by a syndicate of New York capitalists, but the location and the fact that the structure is almost beyond remodeling would, it seems, stamp the rumor as one hardly worth credit. There appears to be no further use to which the county officials can put the building, and it will probably be sold in the future and torn down. (3.)

The breaking up of the "old Brig" will remove one of the oldest landmarks in the history of Queens county government, and one around which there cling many reminiscences of "ye olden times". If those walls could talk, if they could but have the power of speech for even a short time, many a good story of the old court days when the advent of the County Judge and his associates was made the occasion for a holiday by the farmers, tradesmen and men of leisure for miles around. The Court House and yard put on a holiday appearance, stands and booths were erected for the sale of refreshments, there was impromptu horse racing and horse 'swapping' in the highways near by, and in fact for a general good time, the court days of the eighteenth century in Queens would throw the present county fairs far into the shade. It was not on the courtyard alone that the vendors of liquors and refreshments would set up their stands, but in the corridors of the Court House itself, where the more venturesome tradesmen, who stood in good graces of the sheriff, would ply their trade. There were high old times in fact, and the limit of endurance was reached in the early part of 1799, when the prosecuting attorney, in his complaint to his superior, referred to the Queens County Court as being the most disorderly of any court in which he had ever been called upon to practice. It was not until twenty-five years later that the impropriety of selling liquor under the same roof with the highest court in the county suggested itself, and then the Board of Supervisors forbade the sheriff, who it seems eked out a considerable income selling liquor, dealing out any mor fire water in the court house.

The prohibitory law, however, did not have the desired effect. John Simonson was Sheriff at the time the law was passed, and he or his deputies, it is said, erected a cheap structure against the walls of the Court House, and continued in the business. Liquor was sold and passed into the Court House corridors as before and it was not until some years later, in John A. Searing's time, that the practice was discontinued altogether. The Supervisors threatened to punish Sheriff Searing, and he promised never to do it again.

The erection of the Court House was completed in the early part of 1787, and in February of that year the county prisoners were removed from the prison in New York to the new jail by Sheriff Uriah Mitchell. The selection of the site on the plains was not made without a fight. The people in the western part of the county wanted the Court House in Jamaica, on the site of the one torn down by the British, and numerous petitions were forwarded to the Legislature, but the eastern people won and an appropriation of 2,000 Pounds was ordered to complete the work. Afterward, an additional 200 Pds. was raised, so in all the building cost the County not far from $11,000. just three years after the County took possession of the Court House, the first capital trial was held there before Judge Yates, with Aaron Burr as Attorney-General conducting the prosecution. The accused was a negress slave if Town Clerk Vanderbilt of Flushing, and her crime of setting fire to her master's home and burning the town records. She was convicted and sentenced to be hanged, the execution taking place in the following October in an open lot near the Court House. In those days, the execution of prisoners by hanging was made the occasion of a great public gathering and no secrecy was maintained. It was believed that by this method crime would be prevented, the warning conveyed in the execution acting as an object lesson that would never be forgotten.

... The old Court House was a favorite place for the holding of political conventions and public gatherings of all kinds, and it was here that the first County Fair was held in 1819, at which the premium list amounted to $200. The present Queens county Agricultural Society saw its birth in the old Court House on October 9, 1841, when after several preliminary meetings, the society organized by electing Effingham Lawrence, of Flushing, the first President.

In April, 1877, when John J. Armstrong was County Judge, and Benjamin F. Rushmore, of Hempstead, Sheriff, the "old Brig" was vacated and the County Court removed to Long Island City.

... In close proximity to the old Court House stands the home of John D. Armstrong, which has a claim for distinction in having been the birthplace of the late John J. Armstrong, who held the office of County Judge in Queens County from 1866 until the time of his death, a series of terms longer than had ever been accorded any of his predecessors and probably in excess of any that will follow.... Before the Court House was built, the Armstrong house was what would be deemed an old building in these times. It came into the possession of the Armstrong family in 1822, when Samuel Armstrong bought the place from one Seeley. The building is said to be about 235 years old.

There is no date to show when it was first erected excepting that there are evidences that the west end of the building was standing in 1660. (Ed. First home in Garden City Park!) When the Court House was built the house was a tavern and known as "The Three Tons" (4.). It was occupied then by one John Holyrod, and was popular as a place for public gatherings in that section. Later, between 1800 and 1812, it came into the possession of Roelof Schenck, Deputy Sheriff, and he erected an addition to the east end. Then the house, as near as can be learned, fell into the hands of Seeley, from him to John Cheeseman and then to Samuel Armstrong, the father of the present owner. (Ed. In 1894, when article was written.)

It was during Mr. Armstrong's time that the popularity of the house was at its zenith. The host was famous for his hospitality the country round, and many a jolly party congregated within its walls after a day spent at the race course, which had then been moved from the field near the Inn to Hempstead.

During Mr. Armstong's time, and in fact, soon after his occupancy of the house, the first coal used as fuel on Long Island was burned in the grate which is still in use in the east end of the house. Some of the "newfangled stuff", as it was called, was procured, and the fact that it would be set was widely advertised. A great crowd collected to see the coal tried, but they went home after the first day, sadly disappointed. Host Armstrong and Col William Henry Morrell were the Masters of Ceremonies and worked heroically for two whole days in an attempt to get the coal burning. Finally, Col. Morrell gave up in disgust and exclaimed, "Uncle Sam, you had better go up to my farm and get a load of stone to set fire to - you'll make just as much headway."

But Uncle Sam persisted, and finally the attempt to ignite the coal was given up and some wood placed on the grate. After that had got to blazing nicely, the coal was again tried, and this time the experiment was a success. It seems that the long delay was caused by the attempt to get the coal blazing without the aid of wood or any other combustible material.

For many years the County Clerk's office was in this house, and in many other ways it was utilized for the transaction of public business.

... A peculiar feature of the building is that to all appearances, the house and barns are all under one roof. Attached to the west end is a carriage shed, and beyond that other small buildings, until the barn is reached, so that in stormy weather a person can make the short trip from house to barn without getting from under cover.

....

EXCERPTS FROM "REMINISCENCES OF THE OLD BRIG" by RICHARD WINSCHE - HISTORIAN OF NASSAU COUNTY. PUBLISHED IN THE NASSAU COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY JOURNAL

The Revolutionary War was to cause many changes in that part of Queens County which was destined to become the County of Nassau. By far the most noticeable of these changes was the division of the Town of Hempstead into the towns of North and South Hempstead. This separation had been requested by ... the northern portion of the Town, in a petition sent to the New York Legislature. Their desire to separate from the southern part of the Town had begun as early as 1775, when they had taken a strong stand in support of the revolutionary cause while the residents to the south remained primarily Loyalist. ... the Town was officially divided on April 6, 1784. Subsequently, the name of the area which had become South Hempstead was changed back to Hempstead in 1801.

The Revolutionary War was also to make the new Town of North Hempstead the seat of government of Queens County. Prior to the outbreak of the War, the County's courts were held at Jamaica, while all other officials conducted business from their homes. The first Queens County Court House was built there in 1686, ... when the Jamaica Presbyterian Church was completed in 1700, the courts were held there for several years ... in 1708, however an act was passed to rebuild the original building which was then used until the beginning of the Revolutionary War. At this time the building was torn down by British soldiers quartered at Jamaica, who used its lumber to construct their barracks.

When the War ended, therefor, the County was without a Court House or jail. The need for such a building was apparent when it was necessary to send prisoners to New York under a guard of militia.

... On March 15, 1784, the same date that the petition requesting the division of the Town of Hempstead was sent to the Legislature, two other petitions were submitted. Both of these petitions requested the erection of a new Court House and differed only in regard to its location. John Luyster and others requested that the site be at the west end of the Hempstead Plains, while Joseph Robinson and others of Jamaica and Flushing, wanted it located in Jamaica.

...on March 31, 1785, an Act was passed to raise money for a Court House ... allowing the Supervisors of Queens County to raise 2,000 Pds. to build a courthouse and jail. The site specified for its location was to be within a mile of Windmill Pond, at or near the house of Benjamin Cheeseman, on the southerly bounds of the Town of North Hempstead.

This location was the geographical center of Queens County and was undoubtedly chosen by the Legislature because the majority of the County's population was in the eastern towns. The property finally selected was owned by Nathaniel Townsend and was on the north side of Jericho Turnpike, between what is now known as Marcus Ave. and Herricks Road. This would make its present location in the unincorporated area of Garden City Park, just west of the village of Mineola.

The court House was ready for occupancy on February 8, 1787, for on that date the sheriff of Queens County petitioned the Legislature for an act "to remove the prisoners from the jail in New York to the jail just completed in Queens County.

(For the sake of brevity, I eliminate much of the text of this most interesting article which describes in great detail some of the trials, hangings and events which took place in the old Court House.)

In 1836, the court House was described as being "a frame building about 60 ft. square, 2 stories high, in the lower of which is the prison" and in the area there were "2 stores and 2 taverns and a small collection of houses."

(Ed. comments.) Unless one is aware of the colorful history of the old Court House area, not a thought would be given to the dramas that unfolded right here in our own village where a thriving shopping center now exists. The most illustrious citizens on Long Island would come and do business in the courts and be entertained lavishly according to all reports, while within the same building were housed thieves and murderers. In retrospect, it's understandable that be it a County fair or a hanging, any occasion that enticed a crowd became a sort of celebration. Any 'entertainment' would be welcomed by a citizenry who for the most part struggled to eke out a livelihood, and for whom in a sun-up to sun-down workday there was little diversion.

Some of the stories that have been passed down are frightening, some are highly amusing, but had it not been for an "accident of fate", if you will, having the "Old Brig" in our town, there would probably be no records at all of life here two hundred years ago. So taking the bad with the good, we have a 'heritage' to study and contemplate.

It's almost impossible to pinpoint the exact location of the Court House since there have been several changes in the contour of Jericho Turnpike, but it certainly occupied most of the area between what we now call Marcus Ave. and Herricks Road on the north side of Jericho. At the western end of that property was, during the time of the Court House, the home of Joseph Armstrong, while on the south side of Jericho, opposite the Court House property, stood the old house of Samuel Armstrong, (our first home in the area.)

Develpoment of Jericho Turnpike

Roads evolved slowly in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. Paths were worn from house to barn and neighbor to neighbor. Outside of the villages, cattle lanes were followed by sledge and cart. Surveyors laid out highways with transitory landmarks (and idiosyncratic spelling.)

"Survayed and Layed out a highway to be continued out of the highway that leads from Hempstead to Herricks round a watering place know as Clay Pitts 4 Rods west ... and out of the furrow road ... round a watering place known by the name of Wett Holes..." Property lines were no more specific. In 1703, Samuel Clowes, surveyor and the first lawyer to settle on Long Island was hired to plot a piece of property. His report reads;

"A Draft of a fifty acor Lott of wood Land Lying on the north side of ye Greate Plaines near herricks... beginning at a white ocke tree standing in ye north east corner of a fifty acor Parsell of Land...Marked with 3 noches on tow side and ye letters II in ye middle of ye noches it runs Eaighty Rods East to a walnut saplin...

The ancient, mid-island Indian trail was used by the first settlers as they led their cattle to the plains natural pasture, and then by the Jamaica residents as they traveled eastward. Soon we find that stretch of road called the Jamaica Road.

In 1724, as the little villages grew and new settlements sprang up, the old footpaths were less than adequate and the General Assembly of the Province of New york passed an act to revise local road systems. Surveyors laid out the North, South and Middle Country Roads on the island now called "Nassaw." Years passed before the work was completed, but finally the Middle Country Road followed that same meandering path etched by redmen centuries earlier.

By the late Eighteenth Century, stages traversed the highways. Little more than great boxes mounted on springs, roofed with canvas or leather curtains to be let down in inclement weather, they offered the first public land transportation. Uncomfortable at best when the roads were dry, passengers were jostled as the great wooden wheels hit rut and stone, but far worse, when the ground thawed or rain fell, was the mud. Horses slipped and foundered, wheels sank hub deep and to a man, passengers dismounted to lighten the load and assist the driver.

In 1785, when the site, specified as the "geographical center of Queens County" was selected for a new courthouse, it proved to be a little village plot on the north side of the highway. Since the eastern towns were more populous then, much of the 'traffic' came from that direction, and that stretch of highway which led to the building, was called "the road from Jericho to the Courthouse".

So we can trace, right from its beginnings, the oldest road on Long Island, 'our' Jericho Turnpike. One hundred years later, the highway is called Jamaica Avenue from the city-line westward, and of course, Jericho Turnpike to the east. We might still wonder why part of the name is "turnpike". As the need for well maintained roads became ever more necessary, it was clear that the people who used them in some way would have to support the cost of maintenance. By 1807, the general turnpike laws were standardized, and the Jericho Road from Jamaica to Oyster Bay became a toll road. The old highway was somewhat widened and straightened and toll gates were installed, (locally at Rocky Hill Road and Willis Avenue.) At first the local farmers were disgruntled at the prospect of paying to use what was considered a public highway, but the advantages soon became apparent as the road was maintained capably and travel was a bit easier.

For almost forty years, the Jericho Turnpike Co. prevailed, but increased travel and the ubiquitous mud continued to be a serious problem. A much heralded forerunner of the hard surfaced highway was coming into its own, and in 1853, road rights were sold to the Jericho Plank Road Co.

The road bed was excavated and lined with great stones. Heavy planks laid horizontally, provided a relatively smooth road surface. It seemed, for a time, to be the perfect solution to the beleaguered traveler, but it too, after years of use, proved less than satisfactory. Planks shifted and rotted and even then it was recognized that the continued use of large quantities of lumber was not practical or economical. Reportedly with some measure of relief, the company issued a 'surrender of abandonment' to the county in 1891.

A new sport was emerging at this time, and suprisingly, it had a rather dramatic effect on the country's highways. With the development of the pneumatic tire, the bicycle became enormously popular and cycling clubs were formed throughout the country. These enthusiasts insisted upon well maintained, smooth surfaced roads and since a new surfacing material, named for its inventor Mc Adam had been recently introduced, they were accommodated. Bicycles were licensed and guide boards were posted at country crossings, forerunners of todays road signs.

Macadam finished roads were now expected as the norm and they paved the way, literally and figuratively, for future developement. Electrical energy had been harnessed for industrial use and tracks for electrically powered trolleys were laid out between villages.

During the summer of 1906, the New York and Long Island Traction Company opened a trolley line along Jericho Turnpike. A single set of tracks ran along the north side of the highway, with sidings situated every few miles to allow the east-bound trolley to pull off the main track to allow the car heading west to pass by.

The fare was 5¢ a zone, a half-fare rate for students. Connecting lines ran north and south and the Port Washington car boasted a pot bellied stove to warm its passengers.

The old road had come a long way, but there were still some problems along the way. The road we know as our western village boundary, Denton Avenue, follows the bed of an ancient river which carried glacial waters to the ocean. The turnpike dropped so deeply as it crossed the natural decline that it was often flooded, and heavy snow made the road impassable to vehicles. The little green work trolley with its large, front mounted rotary broom could handle a light snowfall, but a substantial accumulation guaranteed a school holiday for students who traveled by trolley to Hempstead, Jamaica and Mineola High Schools.

By the late '20's, the refinement of the automotive engine enabled people to travel independently and newly formed bus companies established routes which were to mark the eventual demise of the quaint orange and yellow 'turnpike trolleys'.

In 1925 the county contracted with the E.T. Earle co. to update the road once again. The sharp drop at Denton was filled somewhat, and the company straightened some sharp bends and cemented the roadway.

While we can trace the develpoment of Jericho Turnpike from the days when Indians camped there, to the modern artery it is today, we can also discover how some of our secondary roads developed.

On our eastern boundary, from the turnpike to Herricks the old road 'from Herricks to the Courthouse' became simply, Herricks Road. South of Jericho the same byway was called Clowesville Lane. The western boundary, the old Tanners Pond Road, gradually came to be called Denton Ave after the Denton family bought the property surrounding their homesite (now Dallas Ribs.) the old County Courthouse Road once veered southwest (it continues in Franklin Square) to meet up with the South Country Road and then east to Hempstead. As County Courthouse Road crosses Jericho it continues northeasterly and is called Marcus Ave. That familiar road was so named in 1910, some years after a large part of its southern 'counterpart' had disappeared), by the Supervisor of the County for his young grandson, Marcus G. Christ. Retired now from his seat on the Appellate Court, Judge Christ remembers bicycling along a winding road with his grandfather who wryly remarked, "Marcus I hope you don't grow up to be as crooked as this road."

Nassau Boulevard, an integral part of the new community Garden City, developed in the closing years of the Nineteenth Century, moved northward slowly. Hoping to capitalize on success of the elegant Garden city community, the Garden City Estates Company proposing a similar development to the north, decided to extend Nassau Blvd.

Wanting to preserve the malled format and eliminate the grade crossing, the new road was created intersecting Jericho Tpke. at a right angle. Mr Ernest Marshall, whose father, Cyril E. Marshall, was the engineer for the project, writes "... my father played a part in the location of the boulevard north of the tracks. As a 'dummy' he bought the lots which were to be used for extension of the boulevard... The developers of Garden City Estates were afraid the price would rise if it were known they were interested in these lots...The land north of the track had been mapped... and the rectangular block system existed, at least on paper...Atlantic Ave, Fulton Ave and Broadway ran east and west as they do today, parallel with the railroad. Running from Broadway, a few hundred feet west of County Courthouse Rd. was Emerald St., a fifty foot wide street only a couple of blocks in length. Using this as a starter..." And so they continued Nassau Blvd. to Jericho Turnpike. During the late Twenties, the boulevard 'crept' across the highway to run a bit further north to accommodate the newly built homes of Spanish architecture at the east end of First and second Sts. By 1939, further development caused the continuation of the street as far as Sixth St. and finally, in the 50's it was fully extended to its juncture with Marcus Ave.

Central Avenue was from the 1870's a road of sorts, for some of its old homes were built during that period. In 1925, in anticipation of the first school in Garden City Park opening, Central Ave. was cemented.

By the end of the second world war, everyone's dream of owning a home was being fulfilled and the farm land of the plains gave way to the real estate developer. Streets were laid out and as quickly, paved. In 1957-1958, sewer systems were installed and a few years later curbstones were laid to define the many little streets.

In 1840, a short branch of the rail road was established from Hempstead Village to Hempstead Branch (Mineola), but the long term goal of the L.I.R.R. was to extend the line to Greenport with ferries running from there to Stovington, Connecticut and then to an established rail line. The Old Colony, to Boston, thus providing a route from Brooklyn to Boston. When in 1850, a direct line to Boston was inaugurated, the L.I. fell upon hard times and for a short while, with rolling stock in disrepair, horses were used to pull the cars on the Hempstead Branch.

THE FIRE DEPARTMENT --X

One of the most devastating tragedies to befall anyone is the loss of home and possessions, and far worse, the loss of life, to fire. One of the first regulations imposed upon Colonial Hempstead residents was that a ladder be always ready to reach the roof in case of fire. Considering that they built their homes with wooden chimnies and thatch roofs, fire must have been a common occurrence. Locally, we read of buildings which stood as symbols of our community's heritage, destroyed by fire. (The Courthouse and the Armstrong House particularly.)

Before the Twentieth Century, there were no organized fire departments, and when a fire broke out, every able-bodied person would come running with a pail, forming a bucket brigade from a nearby pond or well to help a neighbor in distress. There efforts were not too successful.

The first fire department was organized in New Hyde Park about 1900. Mrs. Philip Christ, mother of Judge Marcus Christ, wrote later, "The men got together and organized a fire department, and acquired a big red fire truck drawn by two horses. Whenever the fire bell rang, my Sister-in Law and I rushed across the street to pull the fire truck out of the barn while the men were harnessing the horses and hitching them up to the truck." (1.)

Declining to cross east of Denton Avenue, it soon became apparent that Garden City Park needed their own facilities. In 1910, a fire house was located in a garage behind Higgin's Hotel, (now Gas-Station north-west corner of Jericho Turnpike and Nassau Blvd. The second fire house was situated on the east side of Marcus Avenue opposite Seventh Street), and local firemen with their black gear, striped with white, were nicknamed "The Skunks".

The annual fund-raiser was a clam-bake, held on the point of land where Marcus Avenue and Nassau Boulevard now meet. One early resident remembers, "Indians were hired to bake the clams and corn and children sold chances on a pig and a Five Dollar Gold piece." (2.)

EARLY HISTORY OF NEW HYDE PARK XI

I have included the following reprint of an article I had prepared for the New Hyde Park - Garden City Park School District's NEWSBRIEFS, published in October, 1976.

The information helps, I think, to show another side of colonial history in our area. In Hempstead, we've seen a provincial community, self-sustaining for the most part, struggling to survive and endure. At 'Hyde Park', an elegant home of the gentry, with all the amenities one could expect in the late 17th - early 18th Centuries. It's too late for original research regarding a site that existed centuries ago, but relying on historians of the past, I hope the article will clarify a few misconceptions concerning the area. I've seen repeated several times, in published histories, that Governor Dongan, 4th Royal Governor of the Province, who in 1683 chose to build his country home in what was to become 'Hyde Park', built a courthouse near Herricks Road and Jericho Turnpike. Since the courthouse was built as a result of and after the Revolutionary War, in 1787, (See: End of the Old Brig - Chapter VII), obviously, Dongan was in no way associated with it.

For many years, a marker on Lakeville Road, just north of Hillside supposedly indicated that the Hyde Park Estate had been located there. According to detailed records and the 'Hyde Park' monograph in the Nassau County Historical Society Journal by Mrs. Mildred Smith, this manor house was situated somewhere in the vicinity of where the Long Island Jewish Hospital - Hillside Medical Center stands.

The property commonly attributed to have been the Hyde Park manor was actually the Kelsey house, at one time a very lovely Georgian home, (which was in ruins by the 1930's), but except by proximity, not associated with the elaborate 'Hyde Park'.

Early History of New Hyde Park

More than three hundred years ago, shortly after the English gained dominion from the Dutch over a vast area, including Long Island, Richard Nicolls, Governor of the Province of New York, chose the open grounds of the Salisbury Plain to establish a race course. A 'first' in the colonies, the course was called Newmarket and was located just to the south of the present New Hyde Park Rail Road Station. Many of the participants and spectators may well have traveled the ancient road we call Jericho Turnpike.

Instituted originally as an annual event, with a silver cup awarded the winner, the purpose of racing competition was ostensibly 'to improve the breed.' (Later historians reflected that this lofty assertion continued to be used to justify the practice of horse racing.) A porringer, dated 1668, is reputed to have been the prize at one of these first contests at Newmarket, and is the earliest piece of dated silver still in existence which was made in the colonies.

The colonial settlement nearest to our area that could be termed a 'village' was the Hempstead Townspot, where in 1644, the Reverend Richard Denton brought a group of followers to make their homes. The land, purchased from the Indians, was equally allotted for homesites and farmland, with the largest proportion of acreage commonly owned. The Commonlands were part of the great Hempstead Plain, a unique, relatively treeless grassland, ideal for pasturage.

The Indians had used the plains areas as a hunting preserve, often setting up temporary encampments at the side of a trail which meandered down the center of the island from the East River to Montauk. Grouse, plover and quail, succulent prey of the bowman, nested here and small game, scurrying about, oft in pursuit of the same nesting birds, succumbed to the thrust of the silent arrow. Wolf, bear and wildcat prowled nearby and great herds of deer, valued for flesh and hide, browsed on the abundant plains grass.

A few stalwarts of that early Hempstead group selected homesites far from the village proper, on the edge of the plains, but it is impossible to pinpoint where or when this first habitation occurred within the present village boundaries. Records are not definitive in our terms. We find reference to a house that was built in 1660 at the side of the old trail within the present day limits of Garden City Park, and though it stood with many changes and additions for 271 years, all other particulars as to its origins are lost to today's historian. We do know, however, that from 1684 until the Revolution, some of the most prominent people in the colony lived in the northern sector of present day New Hyde Park.

Under grants by the Townships of Flushing and Hempstead, there was conveyed to the Honorable Thomas Dongan, 4th Royal Governor of the Province of New York, 800 acres of prime land. The northern 600 acres were wooded and hilly and cojoined by 200 acres of plains land. The tract, roughly the size of Central Park, was located just to the south of 'Success' Pond' with the approximate western boundary of Lakeville Road as it stands today. This 'gift' was acknowledgedly made to assure the renewal of land patents and to secure favorable decisions in boundary disputes. Though the tribute seems excessive, Dongan quickly gained popularity, for he instituted and implemented policies long desired by the townspeople. He called a General Assembly of the Province; granted a Charter of Liberties and Privileges; created town courts and assured freedom of religious worship.

Governor Dongan was pleased with his acquisition and chose to build upon it a 'country home' and use the plains acreage for a working farm. Although his official residence, a fine manor house, Caseltown, was on Staten Island, he entertained many notables at his place on Long Island. The house and outbuildings, servants' quarters and stables were on the northern part of the property, about ½ mile south of the lake. The southern portion was under cultivation. Being located just a few miles from Little Neck Bay, guests would arrive by boat and spend their days hunting or attending the races at Newmarket.

In 1688, Dongan was forced to relinquish his position and upon his death in 1715, the land was divided and sold.

About 550 acres were sold to the Secretary of the Province, George Clarke. Within a year, Clarke moved his family into the refurbished Dongan house where he began plans to build a stately home, comparable to Hyde Hall in Cheshire, England to which his wife, the former Ann Hyde, held title.

The family, including eight children, flourished and prospered, and the beautiful 'Hyde Park' became a reality. As Clarke acquired additional property adjoining his original purchase, the entire area came to be called 'Hyde Park,' a name which has been in existence then for about 250 years!

Clarke's personal secretary and deputy in official affairs, Isaac Bobin, carried on a voluminous correspondence with his employer and some ninety five letters, incorporated in the New York Colonial Tracts, give a detailed account of the family's life on Long Island as well as much information about the ordering of supplies and actual building of the fine 'villa' at Hyde Park. Heavy items such as lumber, brick, marble tiles and "beer for the workmen," were shipped from New York and hauled by oxcart from Madnan's Neck (Great Neck). Forty yards of carpeting, furniture and a spinet, imported from Europe, finally arrived after a stormy voyage in September of 1723.

Mrs. Mildred Smith, whose monograph, Hyde Park, has been the primary source of information for this account, speculates that the house was probably of Georgian Colonial design. It was described as "an elegant house in a park of about forty acres of oaks, with six wide vistas ... and grounds ... laid out in unusual style of beauty (having) more the appearance of a European seat than any in the country."

In 1736, Clarke was appointed Lieutenant Governor of the Province and the new position required that he leave Long Island. Two years later the property was sold to Josiah Martin, a prominent and wealthy planter from Antigua. Little is known of his twenty four years at Hyde Park except that as an avid sportsman, trader and shipowner, the estate would have suited him well. When he sold the property, Martin bought four hundred acres on the Rockaway Peninsula and there, some five years later, he built Rock Hall (standing today and open to the public).

George Ludlow the next owner of the estate was, like his predecessors, a staunch Loyalist. That allegiance would, in the future, cost him dearly.

The stirrings of rebellion in 1774 caused some consternation in the conservative Hempstead Town. While it was true that they chafed at certain Parliamentary edicts and arbitrarily imposed tariffs, the Town fathers had taken the appropriate legal means of redress. To their minds, the upstarts calling themselves the Sons of Liberty were nothing but rabble rousers. A brief ray of hope that wiser heads would prevail when some of the sensible and respected citizens formed the 'Committee of 51,' calling for delegates to a Continental Congress, was quickly extinguished when that body proposed restrictions far more onerous than any ever imposed by British Rule. By the time the Revolutionary movement was full blown, those who had remained aloof from the situation, no longer had a choice. The die was cast.

Between April and May of 1775, it would seem that the sentiments of the citizens from the northern part of the Hempstead Town at Madnan's Neck (Great Neck) and Cow Neck (Manhasset) had changed. In April it was reported that there was unanimous agreement by the Township not to send delegates to the Continental Congress, by May 10th the northern communities decided to form a committee for that purpose. The schism within the Town was to grow and eventually lead to total separation.

By the spring of 1776, Patriots had rounded up prominent Tory leaders in Hempstead and had them in custody. In August, in a single day's fighting, the British captured Long Island. They broke through the Rebel lines at the unguarded Jamaica Pass in the foothills of Brooklyn Heights and the seven year siege of Long Island began. The Jamaica Road which figured so vitally in the course of the war locally, was of course, the western end of the aforementioned Indian trail-ancient colonial road, today's Jamaica Avenue-Jericho Turnpike.

Now the Loyalists returned to their land and those sympathetic to the Revolutionary cause sought refuge elsewhere. In October of 1776, over 1200 Queens County freeholders signed an oath of allegiance to His Majesty, George III. Some of the acknowledged leaders in the community were quickly placed in positions of importance. Gabriel Ludlow assumed command of the 3rd Battalion of DeLancey's Brigade. His duties included requisitioning corn, rye, wheat, cordwood, sheep and cattle which were to be used by the troops on Long Island. Judge George Ludlow of Hyde Park became the Superintendent of Police of the Island, being responsible for taking a census to include all assets of the landholders which might be used to further the comfort, if not the survivals of the Occupation Forces. Neither of their roles would have gained them popularity among their fellows. Troops were quartered in every available space and public buildings indiscriminately demolished, provoking the wrath of even the most fervent Loyalist sympathizers.

A few paragraphs purporting to discuss the Revolutionary period, or rationalize the divergent viewpoints would be naive. The brief background outlined here is only to suggest how the lives of the people were affected.

The animosities provoked by the Ludlow's activities brought retaliation by both locals and rebel raiders. "In August of 1779 ... a party of thirty men crossed the Sound in whaleboats, hid their craft near Mitchell's

By Charlotte Henry

About The Author

Charlotte Henry, a Garden City Park resident, has been active in PTA and civic activities for many years. A community leader, writer, painter and maker of miniature furniture exhibited in Garden City, she prepared this article especially for Newsbriefs in celebration of the Bicentennial.

Landing ... skirted Lake Success and surrounded the Ludlow homes at Hyde Park." Intending to capture the Ludlows, when they found the men away from their homes, they stole valuables and took several slaves from the estate back to Connecticut.

Just before the British evacuation of New York, the Ludlows fled their homeland and sailed to England.

The fortunes of Hempstead Town had come full circle. Once again those who had been loyal to the Crown fled and Patriot families, having lived in virtual exile for seven years, returned. People whose families had but a few generations before worked side by side to establish their villages, were evermore estranged.

* This area was once part of Queens County, Nassau being created in 1899.

Since 1775, the northern part of Hempstead, which had supported the Revolutionary Movement, wanted to separate from the Loyalist southern towns. Now in 1784, they formally petitioned the New York Legislature for that separation. At the same time a petition was submitted to have a new courthouse and jail erected to replace the building which had been razed by British Troops. In less than a month, official approval for the division of the Town was received, but a year was to elapse before the petition for the courthouse was acted on.

Sheriff Uriah Mitchell requested and was granted permission to use the now vacant house at Hyde Park for a temporary jail. The beautiful home which had housed the elite of the colony would now accommodate the social outcasts.

When approval for the courthouse was finalized, it was directed that the building be erected in the geographical center of Queens County. As most everyone knows, that specific site was on the north side of the old road, (Jericho), in what was to become Garden City Park. The jail was ready for use in February of 1787. The Attorney General of New York, Aaron Burr, prosecuted the first capital case at the courthouse in 1790.

Hyde Park was once again for sale. It passed through a succession of owners apparently reasonably intact. By 1804, the property was reduced to 431 acres, but had no ready buyers. It was rented for a period of years and in 1817, William Cobbett, man of letters and agronomist, leased the property. It is fitting that the last days of the estate at Hyde Park would be chronicled by so able an author and diarist.

In May of 1819, during Cobbett's absence, fire destroyed the house and farmstock and 'this dear place' as he described it, was no more.

Though the old mansion house was never replaced, far to the south on the Hyde Park land (about 1,000 feet north of Hillside Avenue), Jacob Wick, owner and custodian of the land commissioned Edwin Willets to build a less imposing, but sizable and charming house.

Sometime in the late 18th, early 19th Century, (the dates are elusive), the Dentons, whose ancestor led the original settlers to Hempstead, built a large house on 'Jericho Turnpike.' They owned the greatest part of the land now comprising New Hyde Park and Garden City Park. At the rear of the house were slave quarters and a capacious carriage house long since gone, but the house itself stands. It is now the Charred Oak Manor Restaurant. Denton Avenue was so named for its proximity to the family house.

In the early 1800's, one of Hyde Park's notable residents was Edward Griswold. Admitted to the bar before the age of twenty, "... Griswold was distinguished for his ... great analytical powers, a clear discrimination of legal principles and their application to facts in any particular case." (Thompson) Griswold befriended Aaron Burr when the latter was living in Paris in self imposed exile, and eventually Burr spent some years living on Ingraham Lane in Hyde Park. One might hazard a guess that the stately old Ingraham Homestead, pictured in an early New Hyde Park publicity booklet, may have originally been Griswold's home and that Burr stayed there.

In 1815 the 'Road from Jericho to the Courthouse' was turnpiked. A private company undertook the maintenance and repair of the road in exchange for which tolls were paid at gated intervals.

The Kelsey Family bought the Wick property (still called Hyde Park) and brought the land to its full state of cultivation, with much of the forested acreage leveled for potato fields. Down on the southern boundary of North Hempstead in the Hyde Park area stood one of the oldest homes in the community. There, Anton Herkomer, weaver 'extraordinaire,' lived and created his beautiful tapestries. Fabrics used for the Coronation of Queen Victoria in 1837, were created on the looms of the Herkomers. More importantly, the Herkomer enterprise brought two young men to the community who would provide the impetus for all future development. But we anticipate a bit.

By 1837, the Long Island Rail Road had laid a single track with two daily trains to Hicksville. The most important station was in Clowesville (Garden City Park!) Another boon to the traveler occurred in 1853. The Jericho Plank Road Company bought the rights to a stretch of highway from Jamaica to Oyster Bay. Heavy wooden planks, laid on a prepared rock bed, would finally eliminate the bane of all early transportation, mud!

After the Civil War, two young men from Seilsheim, Germany, came to New York City. John C. Christ was a machinist and Philip G. Miller, a coppersmith. By happy coincidence, Anton Herkomer, the weaver, traveled to the city to procure specially made parts for his looms and Christ was the craftsman who produced them. Herkomer was able to convince the young machinist that there would be a future for him in the small village of Hyde Park and Christ and his close friend Miller came here to live. The now familiar story of how these enterprising gentlemen started businesses, worked for community improvement, and secured a Post Office for the village, has been told and retold, but the inspiration if offers is never diminished. The continued contributions of succeeding generations have earned the respect and admiration of the whole community.

The old story of children walking considerable distances to attend school applied to the youngsters in this area as well. The first school we know of which was attended by local children was at Herricks, in a one room building. Probably by 1880-81, a school existed in New Hyde Park. The building, familiarly known as the 'Old Baptist Church' stands on New Hyde Park Road and is used by the present congregation for Sunday School and weekday activities. Textbooks, used by students in the 'Hyde Park' school in the early 1880's are currently on display at the Garden City Park School Mini-Museum. Following are a few stanzas of a poem written by Tom Moore Guilfoyle who once lived in Garden City Park. Born in 1873, Guilfoyle was undoubtedly among the first students who attended the old school.

"There's a Dear Plot of Ground
That runs through my mind
And I guess in my friends' it's the same,
It is hidden by trees with their foliage of green
When in days I was there, had not been.
Like everything else, as time rushes on
Its changing conditions are seen
And on this dear little plot, which can't be forgot,
Stands the old New Hyde Park School House I mean.
Its successors around it are grand Works of Art
Compared to its shingles and boards
And its quaint little stoop and the bell on the roof,
That oft called us from play in the yard-
Is forgotten and gone like the words of a song
But the tune, that remains all through life,
Gives me courage today to picture so gay
the joys of the old school house yard.

President's Message

Frank E. Englert

This issue of Newsbriefs features various articles reflecting recent developments in the curriculum and services provided by our schools. These programs and projects are designed to meet the continuing challenge of providing our children with a superior education and also enhance the New Hyde Park - Garden City Park community in general, since the school system constitutes such a vital element of its value.

Our schools are not only the centers of education for our children but also house a great number of youth and adult activities throughout the year. Almost nightly, the gymnasia, auditorium, and rooms are filled with athletic, cultural, civic and charitable groups; they include the PTA's, church organization, Scouts, PBC, civic associations, clubs, the Players, and many others. These endeavors are perhaps little known to many people but are valuable services extended to the community in general above and beyond the classroom activity of the usual school day.

Unfortunately, not all is well in the affairs of the District in that a seeming impasse has been reached in the contract negotiations with the Teachers' union. Your Board has been negotiating and will continue to negotiate for an equitable settlement which will satisfy the concerns of the taxpayers and a well-regarded staff, all in the best interests of a fine school system.

LEGENDS XII

Some of the delightful legends that have been passed down through the years are certainly worth a mention. Several of note concern the glacial basin called "Lake Success".

The Indians called it 'Sacut', and the first written records extol it as a "beautiful and romantic object". Dr. Samuel Mitchell wrote that in 1790, he and his uncle "...went to Ronkonkoma Pond... a distance of forty miles, in a wagon, for the purpose of transporting alive some of the yellow perch from thence to Success Pond...in two years they had multiplied as to be caught by hook in every part of the pond."

Alleged to be bottomless, it was sworn that fish, tagged in a Connecticut lake, were found happily swimming in Lake Success Pond. And who's to deny the story of the hapless farmer who carelessly drove his team and cart into the lake. It quickly disappeared from sight,but was dragged some time later, from the East River!

We've had our own ghost too! During and after the years when hangings took place in the yard of the old Courthouse, folks claimed to regularly see the ghost of David Toirin wandering around the 'Clay Pitts', which were in close proximity to 'the Old Brig'.

We've also been told that some of our earlier neighbors were just a step or so outside the law. Poaching on the North Shore estates was not uncommon, and it was no surprise to see a couple of deer carcasses hanging in someone's back yard. However,a few neer-do-wells extended their illicit enterprises and allegedly burglarized their more affluent neighbors. On one foray, with a cache of jewelry and valuables, they became aware that the sheriff was in hot pursuit, so the booty was dropped into a backyard well- never to be retrieved. Perhaps someday....!

ADDENDA XIII

There are many aspects of our lives that we take very much for granted, which were, in Colonial days, considered luxuries.

Today we have both the Postal Service and private couriers vying for business. Overnight and same day delivery of mail and parcels is available for a premium of course, but it can be accomplished.

During the colonial era in Hempstead, an old Scotsman named Dunbar conducted a private route, passing through the village every week or so. This enterprise was illegal, but the alternative was traveling to Manhattan for postal services. For local collections and deliveries, letters, papers and packages would be left under a centrally located tree for nearby patrons, or as a further convenience, a box might be nailed to a tree to accept mail to be picked up or delivered.

Travel on public roads was considered dangerous, so many people ventured away from their villages only when necessary. A friend or servant might carry mail to be left at a central meeting place, often an Inn. The first legal postal routes were initiated for the Royal Governor and eventually expanded to include the general public.

Letters and important documents to be sent overseas were always sent in duplicate, on separate ships to insure safe delivery, since so many ships were lost at sea. (1.)

The first stamps were printed in 1847, with five and ten cent denominations, and bearing the likenesses of Washington and Franklin. (2.)

New Hyde Park got its first Post Office through the efforts of Mr. John Christ and Mr. Philip Miller. When they originally petitioned for a Post Office, the Postmaster General in Washington wasn't convinced that there was enough mail to warrant a Post Office, so the two men initiated a marathon letter writing campaign among the local people. When approval was given, it was expected that the Post Office would be called 'Hyde Park', but since a village in Duchess County had already selected that name, our official name became New Hyde Park.(3.)

Charles Weckerle delivered the mail for many years, either by horse and buggy, or later, on bicycle.

Although the subject has been raised often enough, Garden City Park has never been recognized as an entity large enough for its own Post Office, so we have still have to travel a bit for postal services.

Just recently, another of our beautiful properties was sold. The reamining tract of the old Denton Estate on Jericho Turnpike, west of Denton Avenue, formerly described as having been the "Charred Oak Manor"/ "Dallas Ribs", has been bought by a fast food franchise. Mr. and Mrs. Vincent La Porta, who's property adjoins, recognized the beautiful old house as an historical landmark, and with the help of some of their neighbors, are exploring every avenue to prevent the demolition of one the few historically important and aesthetically remarkable homes in our community.

At this time, the outcome is uncertain, but the efforts of Pat and Vincent must be acknowledged and applauded.

I am including, on the next few pages, some of the material sent to the La Portas relevant to the Denton family and the old house which they have given me for inclusion in our history.

Not only does this material add to our 'lore', but it is an excellent example of how, by gathering bits and pieces of information and enlisting the aid of the 'experts', we begin to recreate our picture of the past.

So much more could be written about the Fire Department, the Water District and many of the old families and homes in our community. We can only hope that people with such information will help to enrich our community's story.

(?)

Builders Buy Landmark In New Hyde Park

The sale of the Denton Estate in New Hyde Park to developers marks the passing of one of Long Island's oldest landmarks and the elimination of the holdings of a family that established ownership 300 years ago.

It was in 1640 that the Denton family came to Long Island. In 1795 the family homestead was built at a point now known as Jericho Turnpike and Leonard Boulevard, and it not only is occupied at present but is in fine shape. The estate originally consisted of thousands of acres, but with the passing of time it has dwindled to 300 acres. A unique feature of the transaction is that one of the lineal descendants of the original settlers, Eugene W. Denton, president of Nassau County Bar Association, negotiated the deal.

The property was purchased by Sunbeam Homes, Inc., Michael Connery, president, and James D. Oattes, treasurer. Messrs. Connery and Oattes, both well known developers and also associated as officers of the National New York Realty Company, Inc., have announced pretentious plans. The property has been surveyed by Paul H. Weckerle, C. E., and laid out into 2,700 lots. These will be divided into 900 plots for individual dwellings, each to occupy a minimum of 60x100. Plans for dwellings have been prepared by Fred J. Burmeister and consist of architecture embracing English and Colonial motifs.

HOFSTRA
UNIVERSITY
HEMPSTEAD, LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK 11550

50th Anniversary 1935-1985

March 23, 1987

Mr and Mrs. V. LaPorta
1738 Broadway
New Hyde Park, NY 11040

Dear Mr and Mrs LaPorta:

I am enclosing some materials which we found relating to the Eugene Denton whose house you hope to save.

Although the newspaper clipping (undated; I'm sorry) dates the house to 1890 as does your letter, both the architecture and the biographical sketch of Augustus suggest a much earlier date. (I would suggest that it probably dates back to ca 1850.)

I hope this information can be of help to you. It was located by the Historian for the Nassau County Museum, Mr. Richard Winsche, who became interested in your request.

Good luck to you.

Sincerely,

Barbara Kelly
Curator, Long Island
Studies Institute

known throughout the world. This concern was the pioneer in the United States in the manufacture of what was formerly known as Deep French Ware, commonly called Deep Stamped Seamless Ware and of Enameled Sheet Metal Wares. The officers of the company are F. Grosjean, president; A. J. Cordier, vice president; James Cochran, secretary; E. W. Ball, superintendent; and James D. Fleming, treasurer. Main offices are at 19 and 21 Cliff street, with branches in Chicago and Boston.

FLORIAN GROSJEAN.

One of the most important industrials enterprises of Long Island, that of the Lalance and Grosjean Manufacturing Company, owes much of its great success and high prestige to the mechanical ingenuity of its president, Mr. Florian Grosjean, who, at the age of seventy-eight years, is now living in pleasant retirement at his beautiful home at Woodhaven, in the outskirts of Brooklyn.

A native of Switzerland, where he was born January 17, 1824, Mr. Grosjean passed a few years in France, where he served as a bank clerk. When almost twenty years of age he came to the United States, and engaged in the importation and jobbing of house furnishing goods in New York city. In 1850, in association with Mr. Lalance, he began the manufacture of sheet metal spoons, beginning on a small scale, with but four workmen. In 1863 the firm removed to Woodhaven, Long Island, where the business expanded to such degree as to require the labor of from seventy-five to one hundred operatives. Six years later, further expansion required greater manufacturing facilities and more systematic conduct of business, and the Lalance and Grosjean Manufacturing Company was formed, with Mr. Grosjean as the president. In 1876 the factories were completely destroyed by fire, but they were replaced on the same site within a few months. Since that time large additions have been made, including one built in 1893, three hundred and twenty feet long and forty feet wide, four stories in height, and with a basement. The works now cover sixteen acres of ground, and afford employment to more than eighteen hundred people. In 189[illegible] company also erected at Harrisburg, Pe[illegible]vania, a large rolling mill exclusively for the [illegible]ufacture of sheet iron and steel sheets for [illegible]sumption in their works. The product of the [illegible]tories comprises stamped sheet metal, enameled and agate nickel steel wares, which include all kinds of household and cooking utensils, made out of one unbroken piece of metal, and their goods are marketed throughout the United States and in all foreign countries reached by American commerce. The office of the company is at No. 19 Cliff street, New York.

These vast results have been primarily attained through the effort of President Grosjean. Eminently practical, quick to discern the requirements of the trade and to adopt and create every successive improvement in the process of manufacture; of untiring energy, resolute will and exceptional executive and financial capacity; calling to his service men of ability and integrity, and giving to the affairs of the company his personal attention—he has, from being the pioneer in this country in his line of manufacture, witnessed the business expand until it enjoys more than a national reputation, being recognized as pre-eminently the largest of its kind in the world.

Mr. Grosjean is personally one of the most lovable of men, delighting in kindly deeds and benefactions to those institutions which are for the aid of the suffering and helpless. The beautiful Catholic church edifice in his residence village was built out of his bounty.

Mr. Grosjean was married to Miss Eugenia Rosselou, a daughter of Peter Rosselou. She died in 1870, leaving one child, Alice M., who is the wife of A. J. Cordier, for several years past vice president of the great company founded by Mr. Grosjean.

AUGUSTUS DENTON.

Augustus Denton, deceased, who passed his life usefully in the town of North Hempstead, Nassau county, was numbered among the most exemplary residents of that region. He inherited the goodly example of an honored and ancient an-vestry, and reared his family after the same lofty standards which he regarded in his own life. The founder of the Denton family on Long Island was the Rev. Richard Denton, who left England to enjoy a broader religious freedom. His descendant, Samuel Denton, was a life-long resident of the island, and a will drawn by him February 10, [illegible]717, is now in possession of Eugene W. Denton. Descended from him was Joseph Denton, who purchased a farm in North Hempstead. He reared the following named children: Mary, Elizabeth, Abigail, Cornell, Joseph, Lawrence, Ann, Deborah and Charles. Charles Denton was a prosperous farmer and a man of the highest character. He was an active member and a warden of St. George's Protestant Episcopal church of Hempstead. He married Louisa Leonard, and to them were born nine children: Almira, Leonard, Charles C., Oscar, George W., Augustus Denton, and three others who died in childhhod. The father died in 1878, aged seventy-seven years, and his widow died in July, 1890, aged eighty-three years.

Augustus Denton, youngest child of Charles and Louisa (Leonard) Denton, was born on the family homestead in 1843, was there reared and there resided until his death, which occurred June [illegible], 1900. He was educated in the neighborhood schools, and on arriving at manhood engaged in farming, which he successfully followed until [illegible]91, when he leased his land and devoted his attention to various business concerns and to the public duties to which he was called. He was for some time a stockholder in the Jericho Plank Road Company, and was its treasurer. He was a director in the Hempstead Bank at Hempstead, New York, and in the Nassau County Bank at Mineola, New York, and trustee of the Roslyn Savings Bank of Roslyn, New York. He was a life-long friend of education and served for some years as a school trustee. In 1885 he was elected supervisor of the town of North Hempstead, and discharged the duties of that important position with such ability and fidelity that, through successive re-elections, his term of service was extended to the long period of thirteen years. In politics he was a pronounced Republican, earnest in the support of the principles of his party, in which his influence was quiet but effective. He was a member of the Episcopal church, and he succeeded his father in the vestry of St. George's church, Hempstead, and for eight years preceding his death was a warden. He was an honored and active member of Morton Lodge No. 63, F. & A. M., of Hempstead, in which he had held all the chairs, and of Hyde Park Lodge No. 3, Shield of Honor, in which he was a past master. In 1870 he was married to Miss Sarah M. Allen, a daughter of George Allen, of North Hempstead. Their children were: Allen C., who died at the age of eight years; Eugene W., a practicing lawyer; and Grace Denton, who was educated at St. Mary's school at Garden City.

Eugene W., second child of Augustus and Sarah (Allen) Denton, was also born on the family homestead. He was educated in the public schools near the home place, in St. Paul's school at Garden City and for two years attended Columbia College. He took up the study of law in the Columbia Law School of New York city, from which he was graduated in June, 1898. He located in Mineola, where he entered upon the practice in which he is now engaged. He is well equipped in his profession, and enjoys the patronage of a large and influential clientele.

JESSE V. BAYLIS.

Jesse V. Baylis, a well known and highly respected merchant of New Hyde Park, North Hempstead, Nassau county, New York, was born at Springfield, Queens county, Long Island. His father, D. T. Baylis, was born at Farmingdale, Nassau county, and comes of a very old family, long established as residents of Long Island. The majority of the male members of the family have for generations followed farming as an occupation. Mr. D. T. Baylis is still living.

Jesse V. Baylis was educated at the local public schools, and at the age of sixteen entered upon his mercantile career. He became a clerk in a general store at Manhasset, Long Island, where he remained for five years, giving strict attention to business, and applying himself to the study of the

893 the
ennsyl-
ne man-
or con-
he fac-
aineled
ude 'all
. made
l these
States
merican
at No.

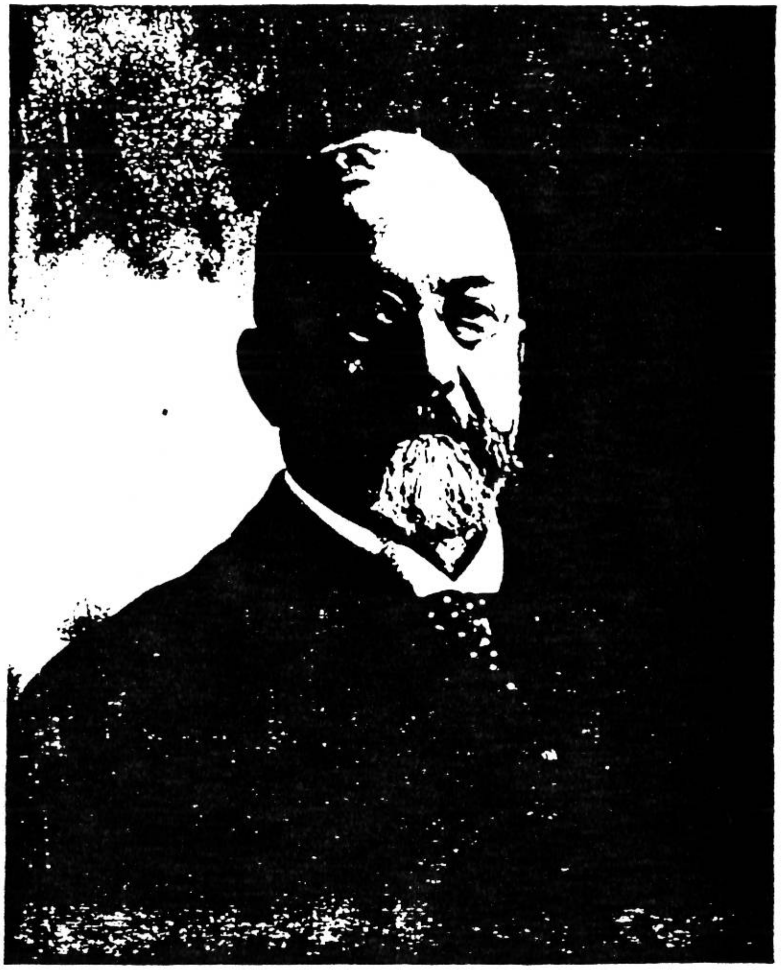
rily at-
osjean
equire-
every

n.
ng
y, and
ersonal
in this
sed the
a na-
-emin-

most
s and
are for
beauti-
village

ugenia
She
who is
s past
led by

d
ent an-



Augustus Denton

the parents of two sons, Philip H. and Leander B.

Philip H. Faber was born April 10, 1864, and received a good education in the schools of Jamaica, it being his father's ambition that he might have opportunities which were denied him in boyhood. For two years he was employed in a dry goods store in this village, later was ticket agent for the Long Island Railroad at the Jamaica station, and then for several years was employed in the office of the county clerk. In 1892 he was taken into his father's business as partner and has since given his attention to the management of the store. In 1890 he was united in marriage with Miss Ida M., daughter of William H. Pearsall, whose ancestors were among the first settlers of Long Island. They have had three children, but one died in infancy, the surviving son and daughter being Mabel Pearsall and Philip H., Jr.

Leander B. Faber was born November 5, 1867, and was educated in the schools of Jamaica, New York and Brooklyn. At the age of fourteen years he went into the law office of H. A. Monfort, the Jamaica attorney, under whom later he carried on his legal studies, and with whom he has now formed a partnership. He was admitted to the bar in September, 1892, and is regarded as one of the rising young attorneys of the county. From the age of fourteen he has remained in Mr. Monfort's office in one capacity or another, with the exception of one year, during which time he attended school in New York City. At the age of twenty-three he was elected police judge of Jamaica. To him belongs the distinction of having been the youngest man ever elected to that office on Long Island. He filled the position with marked ability until the spring of 1895, when he positively declined re-election, his private business having grown to such magnitude that it demanded his whole attention. Socially he is connected with the Jamaica Club and the Chub Club of Jamaica. His marriage, January 26, 1892, united him with Miss Emma R. Quortrup, of Richmond Hill, this county, and they have two children, Madaline W. A. and Leander W.

Both sons and their families have fine homes adjoining each other in Alsop Street, built on land previously owned by their father. They are regarded as among the rising young men of the village, and are energetic in a marked degree, systematic in looking after their personal affairs, independent in their views on all subjects, and strictly upright in all business transactions. Possessing quick perception and sound judgment, they are meeting with deserved success, the one at the bar and the other in the management of the business interests which he holds in connection with his father.

AUGUSTUS DENTON. Among the successful agriculturists of the town of North Hempstead stands the name of Augustus Denton, whose pleasant home is situated about four and a half miles east of Hydepark. Mr. Denton was born on the place where he now lives in 1843, a son of Charles and Louisa (Leonard) Denton, the father being a native of the same farm. This was purchased by the grandfather of our subject, Joseph Denton, who was a successful and prominent farmer. The latter reared a large family of children, as follows: Mary, Elizabeth, Abigail, Cornell, Joseph, Lawrence, Ann, Deborah, and the father of our subject.

The last named was reared on the old homestead and devoted his life to farming. He was active in religious circles and was a member and senior warden of St. George's Church of Hempstead. His death occurred at his home in 1879, when seventy-nine years old. His wife followed him to the grave in July, 1890, when eighty-three years old. Their children were named as follows: Alvira, Leonard, Charles C., Oscar, George W. and Augustus. The latter grew to manhood in the house that sheltered his father and grandfather, and received a fair education in the common schools. Like his ancestors he has a taste for agricultural pursuits, and was thus occupied until the year 1891, when he retired and leased his farm of one hundred and seventy acres. Since then he has given his attention to his official duties.

In his political views Mr. Denton has always advocated the principles of the Republican party, and he is an active worker for the cause of education, having filled the office of trustee of schools for some time. Like his father, he is a member of the Episcopal Church, succeeding him in the duties of vestryman, and for five years has been warden. In 1885 he received the nomination of his party and was elected to the office of supervisor of North Hempstead. So well did he discharge the duties of that position that he was re-elected in 1892, 1894, and again in 1896, thus showing his popularity. Formerly he was a stockholder in the Jericho Plank Road Company, and for some time held the position of treasurer.

Mr. Denton has shown his appreciation of secret organizations by becoming a member of the Masonic fraternity, being a member of Morton Lodge No. 63, of Hempstead, in which he has filled all the chairs, and is now past master. He is also a member of the Shield of Honor of Hydepark, Lodge No. 3, and is past master in that also. In the year 1870 Mr. Denton married Miss Sarah M. Allen, daughter of George W. Allen, of North Hempstead, and they have two children, Eugene W., now a student in the Columbia Law School of New York City, and Grace, a student in St. Mary's School at Garden City.

The founder of the Denton family on the island was Rev. Richard Denton, who came from England on account of religious trouble, and settled on Long Island. Samuel Denton, the great-grandfather of our subject, was a life-long resident of the island, and our subject has a will drawn by him February 10, 1717.

WILLIAM HOPKINS, a well-known and substantial resident of Jamaica South, was born on the place of which he is now the proprietor, January 31, 1859. His father was John B. Hopkins, whose birth occurred in Flatlands, April 1, 1837. The year prior to the birth of our subject he came to this section and took up his abode on the splendid farm which William now owns and where he was content to pass the remainder of his life. In addition to this property he owned much other valuable real estate in the town, but the greater part of his money was made in the sale of fertilizers on Long Island. He was one of the most liberal and public-spirited men of his day and no worthy cause was allowed to fail for want of support on his part. In his advocacy of temperance principles he was always firm. He became one of the directors in the Bank of Jamaica, in which he was also one of the original stockholders, and in many ways aided in establishing and sustaining worthy objects which were set on foot for the good of the community. He filled many offices of trust and responsibility in a most competent and worthy manner. The Methodist Episcopal Church regarded him as one of its most influential members, and in his contributions toward its support he was extremely liberal. His death, January 31, 1894, was a public loss.

Our subject's grandfather, William Hopkins, was born in Wales and on coming to the United States when a young man settled in the Flatlands, L. I., where he followed his trade of a blacksmith and became well and favorably known to its early residents. John B. Hopkins married Elizabeth Eldert, who was born in Jamaica Town, Queens County, March 9, 1830. Her father, Luke Eldert, a patriot in the War of 1812, was born December 20, 1786, and was descended from one of the very old and honored families on the island. Mrs. Elizabeth Hopkins left at her decease three children, of whom our subject was the eldest. His brother John B., who is cultivating a portion of his father's estate, married Ella Rider and has three children, Mabel, Nettie and Bennem. Lillian I. Hopkins, the only daughter, makes her home with her brother William. The father of our subject married for his second wife Nellie E. Stillwell, who is at present a resident of Jamaica, and in that place their son, George S., also makes his home.

The subject of this sketch was educated in the schools of Jamaica, after which he settled down to farm life and has followed this vocation with unusual success. In his political faith he uses his influence and ballot in favor of Republican candidates. He was married in 1884 to Georgiana, sister of H. and J. Camden, large celery growers of this section. They are the parents of a daughter, Florence A., whose birth occurred June 4, 1885. Previous to her union with our subject, Mrs. Hopkins had been married to Philip R. Howard, who at his decease left her with three children.

GEORGE C. MILLS, a feed and grain merchant of Dutch Kills, was born in New York City, October 22, 1848, a son of John S. and Sarah (McPhoren) Mills, natives of New York City and Staten Island respectively. The father was an iron rail finisher in his native city until he retired from the active duties of life, and is now residing in Long Island City. He was also born in the Empire City, but the grandfather was a native of England. The grandmother of our subject, in maidenhood a Miss Sitcher, was descended from French Huguenots, and both her people and Mr. Mills' were participants in the Revolution, as members of the Co-

53.

EUGENE W. DENTON

Nassau Daily Review Star 5/2

WHEN NASSAU WAS CREATED

Denton A Founder Of Bar Association

Eugene W. Denton of 113 Ninth street, Garden City, was not only here when Nassau was created, but his family had moved only since 1650 from the site of the family homestead at "Hyde Park", now in New Hyde Park.

He is one of the two surviving charter members of the Nassau County Bar Association. The other is Justice Townsend Scudder in whose office legislation creating Nassau county was drafted. Scudder, now 84, lives in retirement at his home in Greenwich, Conn.

Denton was born in New Hyde Park on a farm which had remained in the family for nearly 300 years, now residentially developed and known as, Denton Estates. He was born on January 23, 1875. Today he is still active in the law profession at 74 years of age.

Father Was Supervisor

His father, Augustus Denton was a member of the last greater Queens board of supervisors from 1885 and was the first supervisor from North Hempstead in the new county when it was inaugurated on January 3, 1899. His father, too, was first chairman of the Nassau supervisors' board, and treasurer of the toll highway, "Jericho Plank road company." His mother was Sarah M. Allen, daughter of George W. Allen, proprietor of Allen's Hotel, Mineola, political gathering place at the turn of the century.

The present - day Denton was among the spectators when Governor Theodore Roosevelt dedicated the cornerstone of the first county courthouse. He was among the resident attorneys of Nassau county listed in the first published docket for the Nassau county court in 1899.

Denton recollects trying several civil cases in the then "new" Nassau when the temporary courthouse was in the rented quarters of the Mineola Hook and Ladder company No. 1; the site being near the Davenport Press building. He was on friendly terms with such leading men of the day as Judge Robert Seabury, Supervisor William H. Jones of Oyster Bay, County Clerk Tom Chesire of Lawrence and Sheriff William H. Wood.

Was School Director

He was among the pioneer school directors elected for the town of North Hempstead. He was also chairman of the New Hyde Park board of elections inspectors in 1899.

"Gene" Denton graduated from St. Paul's School, Garden City, in 1892. It has always been the boy's school of the Episcopal Diocese of Long Island. There is little physical change in the appearance of the school then and now. In those days, however, it was a preparatory school not only for college but for military service.

EUGENE W. DENTON

Denton remembers that many people referred to St. Paul's as a "miniature West Point." His commencement photographs indicate the military nature of the environment; boys in fatigue and dress uniforms in various formations, and one showing the formation of an artillery position with Denton as the No. 1 man in front of one of the Civil War type cannon. There were few, if any high schools in Nassau county at that time. Some students went to private schools such as St. Paul's, others to Flushing.

"Military training," says Denton today, "was a fine thing from the viewpoint of discipline and physical fitness. I think so now. I'm not so sure that I did at that time."

A Columbia Graduate

He graduated from Columbia in 1898. Members of the class included Jeremiah Wood of Hempstead, former lieutenant governor of New York state, now senior member of the law firm of Wood and Gehrig. Wood's partner is James N. Gehrig of Hempstead, district attorney.

His first law office was in a building, not now existing, near the site of the Davenport Press building. In 1906 the firm was Denton and Weeks his partner being Edwin W. "Ned" Weeks. Weeks became, and still is law clerk to Surrogate Leone D. Howell, resides on Castle avenue, Westbury, and has offices in the Lawyers' Building, Mineola.

Denton planned and built the Denton building at Old Country road and Franklin avenue, Mineola, in March, 1907. His office has been in the building ever since. At one time before the present new county courthouse was built, and when courtrooms were inadequate in the original building, sessions of supreme court and justice chambers occupied the main floor of the Denton Building.

Is Senior Warden

He is the third generation of the Denton family to be senior warden of St. George's Episcopal church, Hempstead. His father and grandfather were senior wardens in the parish which dates back before the Revolutionary war. Denton is one of a long line of Masons. He is a member of Morton Lodge No. 63 of Hempstead.

In 1935 he was president of the Nassau county Bar Association, having previously served as first and second vice president. Some of the charter members transferred from the Queens County Bar Association. Denton was not a "transfer"; he was an "original" member. He helped to found the Nassau association and has retained continuous membership since.

MAPS

Location of Indian Tribes on Long Island	Our Long Island	George Mannello
Hempstead Town Spot	Newsday Bicentennial Issue	1976
Topographical Map	H.F. Walling	1859
Atlas of New York	Beers, Comstock & Cline	1873
Atlas of Queens County	Chester Wolverton	1891
Atlas of Nassau County	E. Belcher Hyde	1906
" " "	" "	1914
Garden City Park	Garden City Park Water District	1941
New Hyde Park and the Hillside Ave. Area	Courtesy Walter Irons Realty	Late 40's
Garden City Park	G.C.P Water District	1948

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Bunker, Mary Powell	**Long Island Genealogies**		
Comstock, Sarah	Old Roads From the Heart of New York	G.P Putnam & Sons	1915
Denton, Daniel	A Brief Description of New York	William Garans	1845
Furman, Gabriel	Antiquities of Long Island	Ira J. Friedman Port Washington NY	1874
Haight, John S.	Adventures for God	Vail Ballou Press NY	1932
Marshall, Bernice	Colonial Hempstead	Ira J. Friedman Port Washington NY	1932
Smith, Mildred	**History of Garden City**	**Channel Press Manhasset**	**1963**
Thompson,	**History of Long Island** **(3 Vols.)**	**Ira J. Friedman Port Washington NY**	**1962**
Tooker, William W.	**The Indian Place Names on Long Island and Islands Adjacent**	**Ira J. Friedman Port Washington NY**	**1962**
Tredwell, Daniel	Personal Reminiscences	Ditmas	1912
Ed. Benj. Hicks	Hempstead and North Hempstead Town Records	L.I. Farmers Print	1896

SECONDARY SOURCES

Hinsdale, E.B.	History of L.I.R.R.		
Lewis, Cyril	Historical Long Island Paintings and Sketches	Long Island Forum Westhampton Beach	1964
Moger, Roy W.	Roslyn Then and Now	Board of Education Roslyn Public Schools	1965
Moore, Rev. Wm. H.	History of St. George's Church, Hempstead	Dutton & Co.	[illegible]
Pelletreau, Wm. S.	Early Long Island Wills		

Prime, Nathan	History of Long Island	
Reifschneider, Felix	History of Long Island Rail Road	Hazelton, NY 1925
Seyfried, Vincent	New York and Long Island Traction Co.	
Smith, Mildred	History of Long Island Rail Road	Salisbury Printers Uniondale, NY 1958
Stevens, Wm.	Discovering Long Island	Dodd Mead & Co. 1939
Werner, Charles	Historical Miscellanies Relative to Long Island	Huntington,L.I. 1927

PERIODICALS

Brooklyn Times	**End of The Old Brig**	**1894**
Garden City Park Civic News	**Interviews with Albert Boardman**	**10/66, 12/66, 1/67 3/67**
Nassau County Historical Society Journal	**Hyde Park, L.I. Mildred Smith**	**Vol. XXXI 1971**
Nassau County Historical Society Journal	**Reminiscences of The Old Brig Richard Winsche**	**Vol. XXVI 1965**
Nassau Illustrated News	Historical New Hyde Park Mona Oppenheim	Dec. 26, 1965
Nassau Star Review	Salute to Garden City Park Jo Roith	Nov.12, 1952
Publicity News New Hyde Park	**Mrs. Philip J. Christ Reminisces**	3/3/50, 3/9/50, 3/15/50
New Hyde Park Publicity Board of Trade	New Hyde Park	1929

NOTES TO THE TEXT BY CHAPTER

INTRODUCTION & CHAPTER I

(1) North & South Hempstead Town Records
(2) Colliers Encyclopedia
(3) Paumanake - Fish shaped

(4) Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York

(5) Nassau County Historical Society Journal - "Tackapausha"

(6) A Description of the New Netherlands

(7) Ibid

(8) History of Long Island

(9) Girdling - Cutting all around the inner bark of a tree

(10) Doublet - A tunic like covering

(11) Seawan - Shells, wampum

(12) The grass on the Hempstead Plains grew to a height of four feet

(13) Wattle work - Poles intertwined with twigs, reeds or branches

(14) Journal of American Folklore

(15) Wigwams - Tepee like structure made of hides

(16) A Brief Description of New York

(17) Colonial Hempstead

CHAPTER II

(1) Colliers Encyclopedia

(2) Colonial Hempstead

(3) Documents Relative ....

CHAPTER III

(1) Colonial Hempstead

(2) N.C. Society Journal - "Hyde Park"

NOTES TO THE TEXT BY CHAPTER

CHAPTER IV

(1.) Brooklyn Times - 1894

The material for this chapter was gleaned from many sources, but most particularly COLONIAL HEMPSTEAD - BERNICE MARSHALL, which I would commend to those interested in an absorbing account of the early Hempstead history.

CHAPTER V

(1) N.C. Hist. Soc. - "Reminiscences of the Old Brig"
(2) Ibid
(3) Garden City - Mildred Smith
(4) Gourly Dyckman Rozycki
(5) Nassau - Smits
(6) G. Rozycki
(7) Madeline Leonard
(8) L.I.Press- Articles
(9) G.C.P. Civic Association News - 1967
(10) Liberty Call - Nassau County - Garden City Park

CHAPTER VI

(1) Colonial Hempstead
(2) Ibid.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Hempstead Sentinel 10/7/42
(5) School Board Records 1906
(6) Ibid 1926
(7) Newspaper clipping

CHAPTER VII

(1) Brooklyn Times 1894
(2) N.C. Historical Soc. Journal - Vol XXVI -1965

NOTES TO THE TEXT BY CHAPTER

CHAPTER IX

(1) History of Long Island Rail Road - Smith

(2) Personal Reminiscences - Tredwell

CHAPTER X

(1) Mrs. Philip J. Christ Reminisces - Publicity News

(2) Gourly Rozycki

CHAPTER XII

(1) N.C. Historical Society Journal - Vol. XXXI - 1971

CHRONOLOGY

1947	GARDEN CITY PARK CIVIC ASSOCIATION FORMED
1949	LARGEST DEVELOPMENT OF SINGLE FAMILY HOMES BUILT
1950	NASSAU BLVD. IS EXTENDED TO JOIN MARCUS AVENUE
1956	NEW HYDE PARK MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL IS BUILT
1957-58	SEWERS ARE LAID IN GARDEN CITY PARK
1960's	GARDEN CITY PARK HAS TWO LARGE SHOPPING CENTERS ON SITE OF OLD COURTHOUSE - BOHACK VILLAGE - NOW WALDBAUMS.
	BETWEEN MARCUS AND NASSAU BVD. HILLS- KORVETTE; (Originally), HILLS: SHOP-RITE;NOW PATHMARK.
1976	BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION GARDEN CITY PARK OBSERVES WITH MANY ACTIVITIES.

THE REST OF THE STORY

(DENTON HOUSE)

When my compilation and narrative of local history was 'finished', I presented a copy to the Hillside Public Library, hoping that it would provide information and entertainment for students and residents interested in their community's beginnings. After several years of research, the decision had to be made to publish the material, and I expressed the hope that 'the story', at some point, might be expanded and extended as new information came to light; indeed, that it be kept alive.

I have decided that the saga of the "Battle at the Denton House" should be detailed, since it has been an interesting development in the community-at-large. It should also offer encouragement to individuals who believe in a cause, even when facing seemingly irresistible opposition, in this instance - a multi-million dollar corporation.

When Pat and Vinnie La Porta (see earlier mention), called upon me as local historian, for information about the Denton house and family, I was pleased to join with them to save the landmark building.

The first meetings between corporation representatives and residents concerning Mc Donalds' purchase of the Denton property, would have dissuaded the less zealous to continue. Protagonists were demeaned and the old house was described as a derelict, with no possibility of rehabilitation.

Could we, a handful of interested citizens, effect a drastic change in the apparently adamant position of the Mc Donalds Corporation? As far as the new owners of the property were concerned, the old house was to be razed. There was little local support. An article in the Nassau Illustrated News, dated June 27, 1987, stated, "the fate of the former estate looks doubtful as a landmark of historic significance but now a landmark of the 200th (sic) Century, a new Mc Donalds..."

Fortunately, our strongest ally was an august body, recently formed; the North Hempstead Historical Preservation Commission. This commission took our petition seriously and literally 'carried the ball' from the time we first appeared to present our case in 1987.

A number of hearings were held, with both sides introducing new information (and arguments). The contention of the lawyer representing the Mc Donalds Corporation was that up to the time that his clients had purchased the property, noone was interested in its status. I was delighted that there was produced in evidence, an Architectural Survey of the Denton House which I had undertaken in 1974, under the aegis of the Nassau County Bicentennial Commission. At that time, the County had called for volunteers to photograph and describe, in detail, properties which might be considered for landmark status. Here we were, some thirteen years later, confidently able to say, "Of course we were interested in the Denton House!"

The Landmarks Commission not only visited the house personally, but also employed the services of John Stevens, Architectural-Historian, consultant to Nassau County. Mr. Stevens' report most asuredly turned the tide, and we could hope.

Barbara van Liew, Editor of the newsletter, published by the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, included 'our house' on the "endangered cultural resources" list in the Fall/Winter, 1987 newsletter.

In January of 1988, the Denton House was declared an historical landmark by the Town. At that time, there was a discussion of an appeal by the Corporation's counsel, so we weren't home free, but we were nearer our goal.

Understandably, residents whose property adjoined the site were extremely concerned about the disadvantages of having a fast-food enterprise in their back yards, literally.

When the McDonalds' Corporation decided to reverse their opposition to restoring the Denton House, they launched an all-out campaign to publicize the venture and tried to allay the very real concerns of those neighbors directly involved. To their credit, the McDonalds Corporation has been acknowledged for their social conscience and good-neighbor policy.

Now that the enterprise is in full swing, I can only hope that our good neighbors can live comfortably with their new neighbor. I recall the comment by a friend, " It's beautiful, but why a McDonalds?" My response had to be "There were only two choices; a Mc Donalds in a beautifully restored house, or a typical small building with great golden arches, housing a fast-food restaurant." I think the former is preferable.

Ed. note. I have included copies of all quoted relevant published material. It was not always attributed in text for that reason.

Builders Buy Landmark In New Hyde Park

The sale of the Denton Estate in New Hyde Park to developers marks the passing of one of Long Island's oldest landmarks and the elimination of the holdings of a family that established ownership 300 years ago.

It was in 1640 that the Denton family came to Long Island. In 1795 the family homestead was built at a point now known as Jericho Turnpike and Leonard Bodlevard, and it not only is occupied at present but is in fine shape. The estate originally consisted of thousands of acres, but with the passing of time it has dwindled to 300 acres. A unique feature of the transaction is that one of the lineal descendants of the original settlers, Eugene W. Denton, president of Nassau County Bar Association, negotiated the deal.

The property was purchased by Sunbeam Homes, Inc., Michael Connery, president, and James D. Oattes, treasurer. Messrs. Connery and Oattes, both well known developers and also associated as officers of the National New York Realty Company, Inc., have announced pretentious plans. The property has been surveyed by Paul H. Weckerle, C. E., and laid out into 2,700 lots. These will be divided into 900 plots for individual dwellings, each to occupy a minimum of 60x100. Plans for dwellings have been prepared by Fred J. Burmeister and consist of architecture embracing English and Colonial motifs.

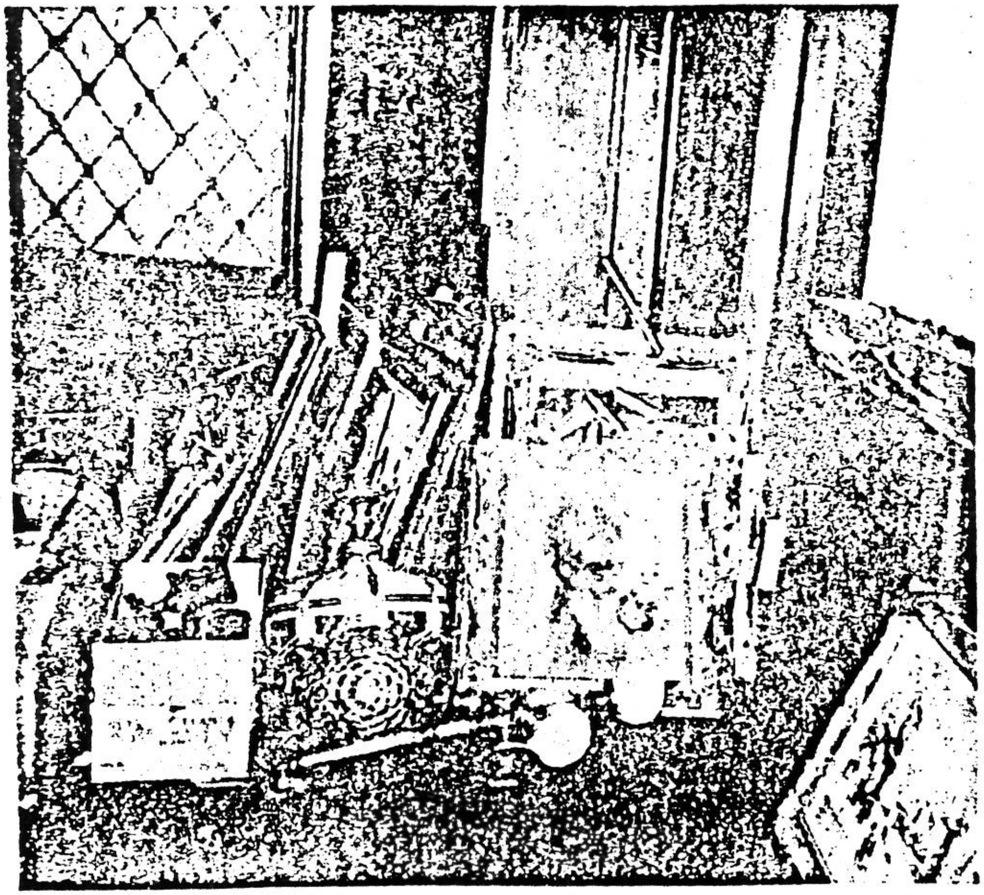
First sale of Denton Estate to developers.
Undated-unattributed

By DENNIS EGAN

While residents of New Hyde Park/Garden City Park scramble to save the former Denton Estate from the wrecking ball the North Hempstead. Historical Preservation Commission met at the former Dallas Ribs restaurant to determine what if any historical significance the building still holds.

The committee, which gathered at the restaurant a week ago last Thursday, June 18, toured the now shuttered structure. The committee found the boarded up building to be in rather poor condition as a landmark with many of the original conditions of the house to be long since removed. The current owner of the property, McDonald's Corp., is seeking to raze the local landmark to make way for another one of their famous restaurants.

Inside of the former eatery, which is in total darkness, they discovered the restaurant portion of the building fairly much intact, as a restaurant goes. The areas that were once lined with hungry customers awaiting their meals is almost unchanged, with the chairs piled neatly atop the tables, the red and white checkered table cloths still intact. The bar, which at one time contained five oval backdrops panelled with mirrors, lies stripped of the liquors that once lined the shelves. And off to a corner of the restaurant, in total darkness, lie the old paintings and hanging lamps that once adorned the walls and ceilings.



THE INSIDE HALL of the former Dallas Ribs is cluttered with the paintings and hang-

All of those things were on the first floor of the former two time restaurant and former funeral home. The basement contained other treasures. Tucked away were mountains of chairs that haven't seen the light of day in decades. There were also other assorted restaurant supplies about, but the real reason that the tour made its way down to the musty old basement was to see if the structure really did contain an original cellar. Committeemen armed with flashlights searched around the discarded items but could not determine if the brick walls that enclosed the area downstairs had been built as far back as the original house. In fact it was doubtful whether or not the basement had even been erected during the late years of the 19th century.

Traveling up to the second floor of the former Denton Estate the **six** man committee passed the kitchen, an area that was traveled by quickly since the former owner left in such a hurry that he "forgot" to empty the refrigerators. The living quarters on the upper floor were some thing to behold. The floors of the half a dozen rooms were littered with old white socks and well worn sneakers; the battered odd pieces of furniture and soiled beds made it obvious that squatters had taken up residence at the homestead. From the historical aspect the inspection looked grim. Most of the door frames that bordered the halls dated back to probably the late 1890's or newer judging from the design and the fact that it was not a one piece frame.

"The attic contained cut beams that were prevelant during the era . . . before the mass production of lumber," commented Dr. George William, one of the members of the Town of North Hempstead's Historic presentation commission. The committee believed that almost all of the window openings had been original but over the years renovations had destroyed much of the originality that was once part of the house's heritage.

Out on the roof the committee found that much of the woodworking that adorns the eaves probably only dates back to the mid 19th century. "From the road it was made to look like a mansion." said Pat. Murphy. On the roof the real decay of the building could be seen as missing gutters and leaders have played a large role in rotting the woodwork.

To the west end of the front of the restaurant Dr. William believes that there must have been a large screened in porch when it was used as a home, and when it was later pressed into commercial use it was closed in. The portico that graces the other end of the house was probably added about the same time. Over the years when it was the Charred Oaks Restaurant many repairs were done to the structure, such as the breezeway at the front door and the wrought iron fence that separates Jericho Turnpike from the parking lot. The only real gem that the Preservation Commission noted was the stained glass and wrought iron patterned window that finished off the main entrance. This was believed to be a valuable piece since it contained wrought iron and not leaded glass.

McDonalds Corporation which is seeking to tear down the landmark has offered to have the structure moved if any organization is interested in such an undertaking, said a spokesman for the hamburger giant. "Our engineers took one look at the restaurant and said no way," said McDonald's spokesman Pat Sweeney. "The smallest fire in the kitchen and we would have more lawsuits that we could handle." The whole layout of the structure would have to be gutted to make it useable from a McDonald's standpoint and even then it would be in violation under their guidelines for use as a restaurant.

The fate of the former estate looks doubtful as a landmark of historic significance but now a landmark of the 200th century, a new McDonald's, will bring jobs and revenue to Jericho Turpike. A public hearing to decide the fate of the Denton homestead will be held on August 12.

An L.I. Landmark Or Fast-Food Place?

By **DEBRA WETZEL**

A PRIME piece of real estate in New Hyde Park has pitted a handful of residents against the McDonalo's Corporation. At issue is whether the nearly 200-year-old Denton house should be preserved or demolished.

The Historic Preservation Commission of North Hempstead is considering a proposal to require that the house be designated a landmark and preserved on the one-acre property. McDonald's bought the parcel last September for about $1 million and has a zoning application pending that would allow it to build a restaurant, minus the company's trademark golden arches.

The Committee to Save the Denton Estate was formed in January, soon after Pat and Vincent LaPorta learned of the McDonald's application. With the help of neighbors and a local historian, the LaPortas began to fight the fast-food chain.

"We believe the town has the money to operate a museum, a Long Island history museum, at the house," Mr. LaPorta said. "This, we feel, is the only house of its kind remaining on Long Island, and to tear it down would be a sin."

"Buildings are buildings," said William Cohn, a Williston Park lawyer representing McDonald's. "The Denton house is in deplorable condition; it was when we bought it."

The white house with black shutters has been the home of two restaurants over the last 10 years. Additions to the structure throughout the years changed its character somewhat, and in recent years a kitchen was added on, the length of the house. Its stuccoed walls contrast with that of the house, which is shingled.

But the chairman of the Historic Preservation Committee, Patrick Murphy, said, "There are pieces of construction in it that I haven't seen in more than 50 years. The facade is interesting, very interesting. The huge brackets that hold up the wooden gutters are unique. Those ornate brackets, carved out of wood, most likely were repaired extensively in the 1950's but are now victims of neglect, cracked, rotted and peeling."

The Denton house is the most controversial issue the committee has faced since it was formed three years ago. The panel, made up of seven historians or architects who serve voluntarily, has until the first week of July to decide whether to consider the proposal to preserve the house. If it votes to consider the proposal, public hearings would be held to decide the fate of the house.

Mr. Murphy said there might be state or Federal funds to operate the house as a landmark.

"As long as the building still stands, even if another restarant comes in, half a loaf is better than none," Mr. LaPorta said.

According to Charlotte Henry, a New Hyde Park historian, the structure was built in 1795. Official town documents, which are sketchy, indicate that the house was built in 1843.

Members of the Historic Preservation Commission recently toured the house for the first time. As they viewed it, six pigeons watched from the roof; two others peered from a nest inside a severely decayed gutter.

The house's original exterior has become porous and is covered with shingles—or siding, save for a few spots. The interior of the first floor, which housed the two restaurants and earlier, in the 1930's, a funeral home, is devoid of most of the original architectural features.

"The original part of the house was probably a farmhouse; then, when the Dentons came into some money, it was added onto in the style of someone who's prosperous," said George Williams, a historian on the commission. Dr. Williams is chairman of the English department at the Port Washington Junior High School.

"These two have been around for a while," said Dr. Williams, running his hand over two door moldings, which he said might be among the few original parts of the house remaining.

The tables where patrons dined are still there. Gaudy paintings and light fixtures clutter the bar section. Blackish-brown paneling and a musty Fis add to the dingy atmosphere.

Not far from the Denton estat two other historical sites, one evi the other not. "Part of the Ge. Furniture Building on Herricks is original, it dates back nearly t time of the Denton estate," Henry said. "And the infamous A Burr prosecuted his first capital at what used to be the Queens C Courthouse. That is now a G City Park shopping center."

McDonald's rejected a sugg by the committee to operate the ton house as is. "We have no inte of doing that," Mr. Cohn said. "I declared a landmark, there's n we could adapt."

McDonald's has also declin consider the committee's sugg that the Denton estate be used Ronald McDonald House, one number of homes the company sors as temporary homes for chi undergoing cancer treatment their families. Mr. Cohn said th poration already operates one R McDonald house on the Island, w is adequate for the area.

The LaPortas say they will their fight to preserve the Dento tate to court if need be. "I'm su this was Port Washington or Ro McDonald's would never have g this far," Mr. LaPorta said. "W middle-class people and know preserving this would give ki good picture of Long Island histo

Bert Cunningham, exec asssistant to the North Hemp Town Supervisor, said there ar many McDonald's in the town said that since 1971 the town has couraged fast-food places in uni porated areas such as New Park because "of traffic, noise, vi blight and a concern for the p living on property adjoining com cial establishments."

He said the McDonald's Cor tion had actively pursued sev locations in the town in recent y

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, JUNE 28, 1987

Nassau Ill

New Hyde Park Albertson East Williston Garden City

Vol. 59 No. 52 Friday, September 4, 1987

Denton House Landma

By MARGARET WHITELY

The newly formed Historical Commission, for the Town of North Hempstead, held their first hearing last Wednesday night and hit an impasse.

The meeting was called to hear an application filed by Patricia LaPorte of New Hyde Park to designate Denton House, located at 2045 Jericho Turnpike, as a Historical Landmark.

More than 135 concerned citizens crammed the Board Room at Town Hall to protest the impending demolition of the building by the owners the McDonald Corporation.

The Commission made up of Kenneth J. Bergin, Nicholas A. Meyer, John O'Shea, Arthur Pederson, George Williams Patrick Murphy, Chairman, and Angelo Corva, Vice Chairman. It was opened by Chairman Murphy, who very quickly excused himself from the proceedings citing a possible of interest.

Vice Chairman Angelo Corva along with Town Attorney Robert Dolan then took over the meeting called first Mrs. Patricia LaPorte. Mrs. LaPorte said she had recently uncovered further evidence that this was indeed the oldest building in the area with construction dating back to 1795. Every indication is that Augustus Denton was born in Denton House in 1843 and a particular phrase, in the document she presented, said that Denton House had sheltered his father and grandfather. Since there are no landmark buildings in town

RESIDENTS JAM TOWN HALL Meeting Room for Land Mark Commission Meeting by Mrs. Patricia LaPorte.

20[illegible]0640 **CR 17

N

News

Park Herricks Mineola Searingtown Williston Park

25¢

©1987 Anton Community Newspapers of Long Island
All Rights Reserved. Central Office Phone 747-8282

rk Decision Postponed

this is "the most important building left in our town."

Mrs. LaPorte was followed by historian Charlotte Henry who registered concern for the devastation of old buildings. She stressed that this building was indeed an oasis of history from the commercialism that surrounds it on Jericho Turnpike. Since this parcel is all that is left of the 700 to 900 acre estate. Originally purchased by Richard Denton, and since Augustus Denton himself was the first Supervisor of the Town of North Hempstead and this is his birthplace, this building must be preserved.

Many residents followed with the same concern that indeed they wanted left intact this building for their children and grandchildren. The only one dissenter was an owner of a business near the Denton House, who lives in Elmont. He felt that if the business was not McDonald's, a fast food chain, that no one would care. His comments brought a cry of outrage from the audience and more than once Vice Chairman Corva had to call for order. One resident did ask the Commission what it would mean if the property was designated a "landmark". He was told that certain guidelines would have to be met by the owner to maintain the building. It would indeed be a McDonald's Restaurant, however the building could not be demolished.

garding Denton House application filed

and several nieces

Lawyer William Cohn, speaking for McDonald's, then spoke. On admission of Vice Chairman Corva that the commission will be presenting further evidence in the case, Mr. Cohn stated that until such evidence in the case could be studied by him he would go no further in his testimony. The Commission tried in several different ways to urge Mr. Cohn to present his case and he said in no way did he feel he could continue until he could review all the information.

This went back and forth between the commission and Mr. Cohn and then finally Mr. Cohn took his seat.

Resident input continued stating the windows were out and rodents were running all about the building and people were using the grounds for a dumping area. The residents asked the Commission if, McDonald's as the owner, was responsible for this deplorable condition of the property. Mr. Cohn said that indeed McDonald's would look into the situation immediately.

It was also entered into the records of the Commission that a landmark site, in the south, owned by McDonald's, had been handled very nicely and perhaps that this would be case here. Another resident stated that it was his feeling that meat was still in the lockers in the building. The Commission said they would most definitely check that fact immediately. The meeting was then adjourned until October 7 at North Hempstead Hall Meeting Room at 7:30pm.

Newsday Sept 1987

Decision Reserved On Historic House

By Carmel McCoubrey

A North Hempstead town commission deliberating landmark status for a 140-year-old New Hyde Park house slated to be demolished for a fast-food restaurant adjourned without a decision after a public hearing last night.

People living near the house, on Jericho Turnpike, have asked the town Historic Landmark Preservation Commission to grant landmark status to the white-clapboard former farmhouse, which the McDonald's chain wants to demolish to make way for a restaurant.

About 100 people, most supporting landmark status for the building, turned out for the meeting.

"To have a structure of that beauty and to think it could become a McDonald's, which has no historical meaning, is a shock and an outrage," said Warren Brown, of East Williston.

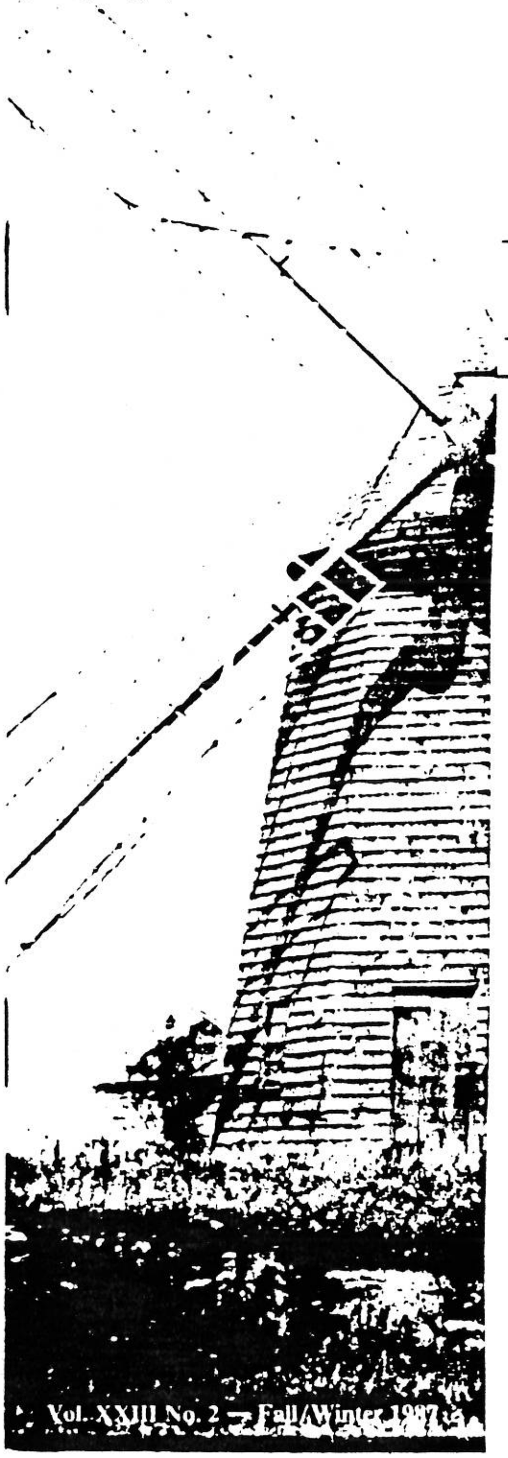
William Cohn, an attorney for McDonald's Corp., attended but declined to testify, saying he wanted time to review evidence from architectural experts about the property. "From what I heard tonight, there would be no reason to give the building landmark status," Cohn said.

McDonald's bought the house last fall and plans to raze it and build a 102-seat restaurant on the site. References to the house, which was built or bought by a descendant of the Rev. Richard Denton, founder of Hempstead, date to 1843. For at least the past 30 years, the house has been used as a restaurant.

The hearing is to continue Oct. 7.

PRESERVATION NOTES

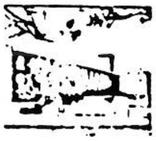
society for the preservation of Long Island antiquities



Vol. XXIII No. 2 — Fall/Winter 1987

ENDANGERED

The following Long Island cultural resources face uncertain futures as the result of proposed development, under-utilization, misuse, neglect, or plans for unsympathetic renovation.



Patchogue
Patchogue Lace Mill., inventoried by HAER in 1974.
Built 1890's, architect not known.
Problem: Present owner proposes to demolish th landmark.

Poquott
Tinker mansion.
Built 1928, architect Philip L. Goodwin of N.Y.C.
Problem: Sold with large acreage to a developer who being urged to preserve the house.

Brooklyn
Erasmus Hall Academy.
Built 1786, architect unknown.
Problem: Located on the Erasmus Hall High Scho grounds, this landmark is deteriorated.

Center Moriches
Lindenmere estate.
Built 1908, architect unknown.
Problem: Recently restored by Imelda Marcos, th property will be turned over to the Philippi government. Preservationists hope it will not b sold to developers.

Flanders
"The Big Duck," Route 24.
Built 1930-31, by Collins brothers.
Problem: Property has been sold.

New Hyde Park
Denton house.
Built ca. 1843, architect unknown.
Problem: The McDonald Corp., which has purchase this historic house, is being urged to adapt it fo re-use, instead of demolishing it.

Arverne
Congregation Derech Emunoh Synagogue.
Built 1903, architect William A. Lambert.
Problem: Building only minimally used.

RECOMMENDATION FOR PRESERVATION

DENTON HOUSE

2045 Jericho Turnpike
New Hyde Park, New York

JOHN R. STEVENS ASSOCIATES
1 SINCLAIR DRIVE, GREENLAWN, N. Y. 11740

DENTON HOUSE— 2045 Jericho Turnpike, New Hyde Park.

On Thursday, August 27 Mr. Pat Sweeney of the Macdonald Restaurant Co. provided me with access to the interior of the Denton house, and this report in large part is the result of that visit.

Description

The main part of this house is a five bay, two room deep, center hall structure. The first floor has three sided, angular bay windows flanking the entrance. The spacing of the east pair of second floor windows is somewhat wider than those on the west side, indicating that the east rooms were somewhat wider than those on the west side. The east rooms on the first floor were probably built as double parlors, and are referred to as the "ballroom" in Mrs. Borden's letter. The facade is slightly asymmetrical. The main elevation is parallel to Jericho Turnpike and faces south.

The house has a moderately pitched gable roof with wide, projecting cornice gutters supported of five pairs of shaped brackets and having turned drops. Smaller brackets are equidistantly spaced between the paired ones. The same treatment is also used on the wing roof, and the roofs of the bay windows. Originally there had been two, symmetrically placed chimnies on each gable end. These were removed at an unknown date.

The windows had two-over-two double-hung sash, of which only a few sets survive. The windows had, on the exterior, heavy projecting cornices of which only two survive on the north wall, second floor of the wing. A semi-circular headed window is centrally located in each gable.

The placement of the three bay wing, attached to the west wall of the main unit is somewhat odd in that its front wall is set well back from the front wall of the main unit. The north wall of the wing projects some feet beyond the corresponding wall of the main unit. The ceiling heights in the wing are lower than in the main unit. its roof pitch and roof edge treatment is the same as the main unit.

It is possible that the wing, which contained the kitchen and the dining room, and also the servants' stair, was an earlier structure. It may have existed on the present site, or may have been moved to it from another location when the main unit was built. This might possibly explain its eccentric location relative to the main unit, but this is only speculation. The framing of the wing, which can be seen in its attic, and also in the south west second floor room (where areas of plaster have been removed) is sawn softwood, the same as in the main unit. All of the surviving trim in the wing is contemporaneous with the main unit.

24

The framing of the main unit is exposed in the attic, and shows in the knee walls which are about three feet high. It is all of sawn softwood, and obviously well executed. There are no corner braces showing in any of the wall planes. The walls are sheathed with tongue-and-grooved boarding. The exterior is apparently covered with narrow weatherboarding, now all covered with asbestos shingles. The rafter system is supported, both in the main unit and the wing, with a ridge beam. This latter is supported on two posts located on the positions of the hall walls. There are no collar ties, and the attic space is unobstructed except for the aforementioned posts and a small room in the north east corner. The wood shingle roof, now covered with later material, is laid on 1" by 2" sawn shingle lath.

The form of the house is vernacular, derived from the Georgian five bay, two story center hall style.. The exterior detailing is Italianate. The house would appear to date to c. 1875.

Interior

No old work has survived on the first floor. The original main entrance has been completely obliterated. Most of the main stairway has been removed, as also has the servants' stair from the first to second floors. Access to the second floor is now by means of a stair against the north wall, in a modern addition.

The second floor is very much intact, the major loss being the fireplaces and chimney breasts. The landing of the main stairway survives, and connects with the new stair that has been mentioned. There is a short run of steps from the landing to the second floor level. The railing around the well opening is missing, but the baluster locations are plainly evident.

The small room over the front (south) of the hall communicates with the south west room by a wide opening with a semi-elliptical arch in molded plaster. There are cast plaster corbels of characteristic design. Both rooms retain their original molded plaster ceiling cornices. The second floor has four large rooms, plus the small room mentioned. Most of the second floor wood trim has survived, including the rooms in the wing. It is all of the same design. Only a few of the windows- those on the north side- retain their original casings. Most lost their trim when new window frames were installed in the recent past.

Doors are four panel. They have decorated cast-iron hinges with acorn finials, and mortice locks. Some retain the original earthenware knobs. One door in the hall, and its associated trim (to north west room) retains its original finish. Floor boards show 5¼" width.

The attic stair is located in the wing, against the west wall of the main unit. It is in wholly original condition. The basement was not examined.

Assessment

The Denton house was a good example of a third quarter of the 19th century building with Italianate detailing. It had obviously been the home of a prosperous but conservative family. It was built to a generous scale, with good-sized rooms. Its size made it readily adaptable for use as a restaurant. During its history as a restaurant, its first story has been gutted and additions have been built against it, expanding its first floor area considerably. Some effort had been made, at least in the earlier phases of change, to make the additions harmonize with the original structure. Some of the additions have not been too well integrated, as for example the port-cochere and entrance vestibule addition. In spite of unfortunate changes and additions, the upper part of the Denton house has managed to survive relatively little altered.

The structure of the house was first-class when it was built, and survives in excellent condition. There are two problem areas- on the north wall of the main unit were the cornice gutter has failed, causing some rot to develop in the knee wall. Staining of the cornice gutter at the front of the wing is indicative of similar problems developing in that area. All in all, the house is in very good structural condition.

The Denton house is unquestionably a good example of its type, and is deserving of preservation as a link with Long Island's past. Most of the surviving exterior detail is restorable, and missing elements can be replicated from surviving examples, or reconstructed (in the case of the main entrance) on the basis of old photographs of the house that have recently become available.

The Warmuth Saloon on Roslyn Road in Roslyn Heights is similar in age and general type to the Denton house. It was not as well-built a structure to start out with, and in 1980 existed in a deteriorated and vandalized state, ready to be demolished. The first floor had been greatly altered over the years, and shop windows had replaced the house-type windows. Because of the intervention of the Roslyn Preservation Corporation, the Warmuth Saloon has been rebuilt from a ruin and an eyesore, to an area landmark. It is used as prime office space. It is undoubtedly a more attractive presence on its corner, opposite the Roslyn High School, than a modern replacement structure would likely be.

The renaissance of the Warmuth Saloon provides a good example of what could be achieved with the Denton house. I would like to hope that the Denton house could be allowed to survive, if not used by Macdonald's on its present site then moved elsewhere- its exterior restored and returned to a profitable use in the community. This sound, formerly attractive house represents a dwindling number of superior 19th century buildings in Nassau County that give some idea of what our past had been as well as being useful for contemporary building needs.

John R. Stevens

September 1, 1987

John R. Stevens,
Architectural Historian,
Restoration Consultant.

New McDonald's To Have Old Look

By Ellen Braitman

Come April, the historic Denton home in New Hyde Park will again be open to hungry visitors. But this time around, the food of choice will be Big Macs and Happy Meals.

After months of controversy involving neighborhood residents concerned about the impact of the restaurant, McDonald's officials yesterday broke ground on the $4-million construction and renovation that will restore the white, clapboard house on Jericho Turnpike and transform it into a fast-food restaurant.

When the eatery opens, it will be the world's 12,000th McDonald's and the only one in the United States in a wholly restored building.

When McDonald's bought the Denton house and property in September, 1986, officials initially planned to raze the building and erect a typical McDonald's. However, the designation of the site as a historic landmark in January, 1988, spurred McDonald's officials to pursue restoration.

Last month, the North Hempstead Town Board cleared the company's final obstacle for the project when it voted to approve the plan with board-imposed conditions aimed at keeping noise and smells away from neighbors. The plan had been approved by the landmark commission and the zoning board.

The owner and operator of the New Hyde Park franchise, Larry Anderer, yesterday called the project "a chance to preserve a little bit of the history of Long Island." Anderer, who sat for five years on the planning board in Rockville Centre, said, "I think this is going to enhance the beauty of New Hyde Park."

Angelo Corva, the vice chairman of the Landmarks Preservation Commission of the Town of North Hempstead, agreed, saying the restoration "will be preserving the architectural heritage of the building."

As of now, the three-story house standing on a 1.1-acre lot on Jericho Turnpike is in disrepair with boarded windows, overgrown grass and chipped paint. The interior is stripped, and there are holes in some of the floors and walls. Since the 1940s, the house had been operated for a number of years as a restaurant.

When the restoration is complete, the front exterior will be restored to match a 1920 photograph of the house; there will be an addition to the back and sides for a drive-through service; a parking lot for about 45 cars will be built in front of the house; and dining areas will be built on part of the ground floor and on a mezzanine on the second floor, opening into a cathedral ceiling where the attic is, said Paul Facella, vice president and manager of McDonald's New York region.

The decor, Facella said, will be a "blend of both old and new elements." Plans call for wood and tile floors and floral wallpaper similar to what was in the house in the 1920s.

Facella said the company anticipates the New Hyde Park franchise to be successful because there are no similar restaurants in the area and because the nearest McDonald's restaurants are in Elmont and Carle Place. This, he said, is the reason McDonald's is willing to invest a substantial sum into the restoration and construction project.

The new restaurant will have seating for 125, a McDonald's Playland area and a special video and dining room for families and children's parties.

Newsday / Dick Yarwood

Facella and Ronald McDonald outside Denton home

Preservare

VOL. 1, NO. 1 *The Official Newsletter of the Town of North Hempstead Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission* NOVEMBER 198

A Message from the Chairman...

Patrick M. Murphy

On behalf of the members of the Town of North Hempstead Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission, it is my pleasure to welcome you to "Preservare." In our first issue you will be introduced to all the sites the Commission has designated to date as historic Town landmarks. While each site has its own story to tell, we focus on the Denton House in New Hyde Park, the most recently designated site, for this premiere issue. Also included in this issue is a detailed explanation of the Town's historic landmark preservation procedure. You also will find bits of trivia, various facts about local history, and other points of interest.

We are fortunate to live in a town so rich in history. Recognizing the importance of our heritage, the Town Board, under the guidance of North Hempstead Supervisor John Kiernan, has established the Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission to help protect and preserve historically significant sites located within the unincorporated areas of the Town.

The Commission's role is to review applications for landmark status and make recommendations to the Town Board. The members of the Town Board make the final decisions regarding designation. Six sites already have been placed under the protection of North Hempstead's Landmarks Law to date.

It is my sincere hope that, with the continued support and cooperation of Supervisor Kiernan and members of the Town Board, we can serve the residents of the Town of North Hempstead by increasing the number of designated sites, protecting and preserving them from possible destruction, while making our history available to present and future generations.

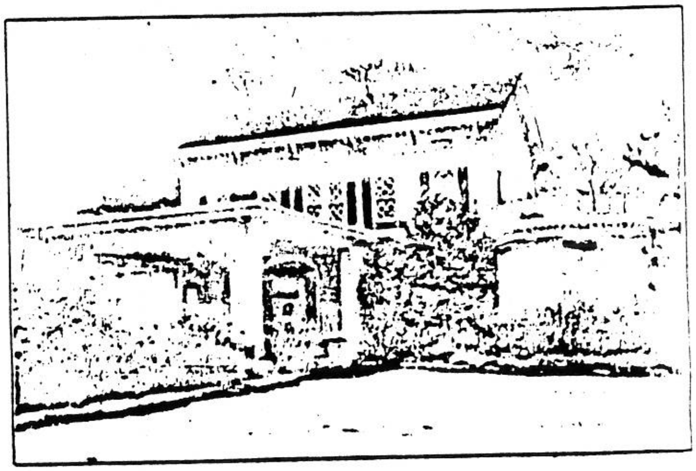
Denton Home Earns Landmark Status

The Denton House in New Hyde Park is the site most recently designated by the Commission as an historic landmark.

"As a landmark, the Denton House provides us with an example of our historic heritage, linking Long Island's past with today and future generations," Councilman Charles Fuschillo said.

The house, built as a farmhouse around 1870, was the home of the locally prominent Denton family, which includes the former North Hempstead Town Supervisor Augustus Denton. The property originally included thousands of acres which have gradually diminished over time. In the 1920's, the last large piece of land, totalling 300 acres, was sold and divided into some 900 individual plots upon which many homes have been built in New Hyde Park. The Denton House was then sold for commercial use and it became a restaurant, known for many years as the Charred Oak Manor, and most recently as Dallas Ribs.

It was at the request of local residents that the Commission began its extensive research on the Denton House. The Commission found that the house is not unusual for late-19th century architecture, althoug few others of similar style can be found in the vicinity



As a result of recommendations of the North Hempstead Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission, the Town Board recently designated the *Denton House*, located at 2045 Jericho Turnpike, New Hyde Park, as an historic landmark.

continued on back pag

Did You Know...

...that the first paper mill in New York was built in 1773, by Hendrik Onderdonk in Roslyn (then known as Hempstead Harbor). The mill became an important industry during the American Revolution because paper was a critical military material. The mill was located on Paper Mill Road in Roslyn Pond Park, where a smaller model was erected in 1915.

...that at the time of the American Revolution Hempstead and North Hempstead comprised one township. The people in northern Hempstead, perhaps influenced by revolutionary sentiments from nearby New England, felt patriotic, while most people in southern Hempstead were overwhelmingly Tory. This resulted in a bitter split during the Revolution that ultimately led people in the north to petition the State Legislature to establish the Town of North Hempstead, which was accomplished in 1784.

Denton Home

continued from front page

according to Commission Vice-Chairman Angel Corva. The house, derived from a Georgian style, i considered a good example of its type—a five-bay two-story, center hall form with *Italianate* detailing on the exterior.

On the exterior, the visible asbestos shingles are relatively new, but the original tongue and groove boarding, as well as the original wood shingle roof characteristic of the late 1800's, can be found underneath. A few sets of double-hung windows have survived and wide-bracketed cornice gutters have been retained as part of the original design.

Regarding the interior of the house, most of the original detailing, including wood trim and molding, is evident on the second floor, with cast plaster corbels of characteristic design and molded plaster ceiling cornices are still in existence in the upstairs rooms.

"The Denton House is considered to be in good structural condition suitable for restoration," said Planning, Research and Development Department Commissioner Kenneth Bergin, who is a member of the Commission.

Newsday

Sunday, April 1, 1990

N. HEMPSTEAD Special

By Maureen Fan

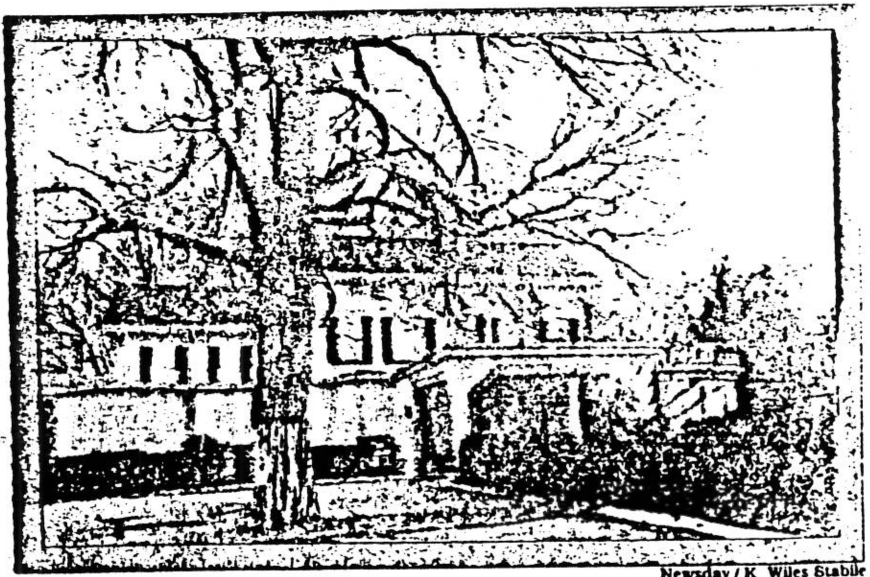
If the Town of North Hempstead grants approval, it could be the planning equivalent of a landmark house with the works: a fast-food restaurant located in a New Hyde Park farmhouse that dates back well over 100 years.

But local residents, who have fought the proposal since learning of McDonald's plans three years ago, say Big Macs have no place in a historical landmark. Both sides will have their say at a public hearing scheduled for April 11 before the town's zoning board of appeals.

McDonald's is proposing a $2.5-million restoration of the Denton House at 2045 Jericho Tpke., originally the home of the locally prominent Denton family, who owned a farm on several thousand acres of what is now New Hyde Park. It hopes to turn the white clapboard structure, which has been dated to the 1860s or '70s, into a 120-seat fast-food restaurant and open its doors by April, 1991.

After the public hearing, McDonald's must also get site-plan approval from the town to go ahead with its plans. Though the site has been for many years the home of several other restaurants — including most recently Dallas Ribs — McDonald's plans do not meet zoning codes and may require variances or conditional-use permits. The 48,000 square-foot site is zoned for both residential and busi-

Please see LANDMARK on Page 5



Newsday / K. Wiles Stabile

The Denton House as it appears today and, in artist's rendering below, restored as a 120-seat McDonald's restaurant, complete with drive-through window.

Landmark McDonald's Debated

LANDMARK from Page 1

ness. Before Dallas Ribs, during the '70s, the house was the site of the Charred Oak Manor Restaurant. Town officials said the house had been used as a restaurant since the 1930s.

Town officials declared the structure a historical landmark in January, 1988, after residents, in response to McDonald's plans, asked them to try to save the building.The designation prevents it from being razed. "What it does is restrict what can be done to the building," Building Commissioner Bob Bonnie said. "If the board of zoning appeals permits the conversion to a McDonald's, then the town's Historical Landmarks Preservation Commission would set the manner in which it could be done, the materials, what's compatible."

John Stevens, architectural historian consultant to Nassau County, testified in November, 1987, for the town during a hearing on landmark designation and said during a recent interview that he believed the house was built in the 1860s or early '70s. "From old photographs you can tell it was a very fine-looking house. . . . I do believe it had considerable significance as a fine example of an Italianate period house on Long Island, and certainly in Nassau County there are few left."

McDonald's, which bought the site in 1987 for $1 million and first planned to tear the house down, is billing the restoration as a "historic" proposal that will allow a dilapidated house to "recapture its vibrant past by playing host to patrons of a new McDonald's family restaurant."

"At the time we had no idea of the significance of the building to the town," said Judy Pascucci, a real estate representative for the company. "We only found out when it was proposed that it be rezoned to a historical designation."

McDonald's then put the project on hold for a few years, Pascucci said, until last year when Pascucci approached the town about the possibility of restoring the building. She said McDonald's had built a similar restaurant in a historical landmark in Freeport, Maine.

George Williams, a commissioner on the town's Historical Landmarks Preservation Commission, said: "People might be opposed to McDonald's but I don't think they could have a nicer looking restaurant, if it's restored in the manner we understand it will be restored."

The house will be restored to the way it was in 1926 because a photograph from that year "is really the last photograph we have before that house became a restaurant," Williams said.

Barbara Van Lieu, who edits a newsletter published by the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, credited McDonald's with an idea that would upgrade the whole neighborhood. The restoration is "a nuisance for them," she said. "When they discovered this house was a landmark they could have thrown up their hands and dumped it on the market."

But Robert MacKay, director of the society, was more cautious: "Restaurants have such a high volume of visitation that usually it's a difficult mix with a landmark building, especially a fast-food restaurant."

Residents in the immediate neighborhood agree with MacKay. They describe a closely knit community where people worry about children playing on tree-lined streets that may become congested with traffic. They are angry about plans for a drive-through section that fronts on the residential portion of the lot, citing concerns about noise, odors from garbage and loitering.

"Putting a fast-food restaurant in a historical landmark does not make any sense. . . . To me that doesn't go," said Franciska Makowensky, who lives on Park Avenue and faces the side of the proposed restaurant.

"We are very upset because they're going to put in a commercial situation bordering on a residential neighborhood . . . It's a horrendous situation," said Nanette L'Hernault, who lives on Broadway directly behind the site. "We are absolutely livid. They have not assured us . . . that we will not have to smell the horrible smell of McDonald's food 24 hours a day."

Suzanne Sheedy, who lives right behind the site, said she won't be able to open any windows or doors during the summer because of car exhaust fumes and loud noise. She is also worried about the possible deterioration of property values.

"I get wrappers from Taco Bell on my front lawn," said Laurie Athenas, who lives on Broadway near Leonard Boulevard. "Now we're going to have McDonald's around?"

Similar comments were raised at a March 20 meeting at the Knights of Columbus hall in New Hyde Park, attended by about 60 residents. Invitations had been sent to everyone who lives within 200 feet of the property, said Peter Mineo, the attorney for the company.

Because McDonald's plans called for parking spaces within 200 feet of the property line and a menu sign within the residential portion of the site, variances from zoning requirements will be necessary, town officials said. Variances are also necessary because the plans did not include a commercial loading area and because the restoration will involve frame construction, not non-combustible concrete block.

Mineo said amended plans had been drawn up that alleviated the concerns, but acknowledged that variances would still be required.

McDonald's says that trees and shrubs will surround the property and refuse will be stored in a sealed refrigeration unit before disposal.

"We would not under any circumstances permit the McDonald's to be a hangout . . . as far as debris and litter, McDonald's standards are to clean an area in a one block radius of the store, so we're not only cleaning up our own, we're cleaning up for others," Pascucci, the company's real estate representative, said. "We're as concerned about preserving our heritage as anybody else is."

NASSAU

Newsday June 28 1990

Foes Line Up, Speak Out Against Drive-Through

But say proposed McDonald's in historic home OK

By Reggie Rivers

A handful of New Hyde Park residents, who live near a landmark house proposed for restoration and conversion into a McDonald's restaurant, waited nearly four hours Tuesday to tell North Hempstead Town Board members that the restaurant is OK — they just don't want the drive-through window.

The planned $2.5-million restoration of the Denton House on Jericho Turnpike, originally the home of the locally prominent Denton family, has sparked concerns among nearby residents that noise, carbon-monoxide emissions and vibrations from the hundreds of cars that would use the drive-through daily would disrupt the residential area.

"My house is less than twenty feet from the McDonald's property," said Suzanne Sheedy, who was one of about eight residents who stayed into the early morning hours Wednesday to be heard on the issue. ". . . You're moving Jericho Turnpike traffic next to my home, and any type of car can come in there. They don't have to have mufflers. They can be in there making noise and have their stereos blasting," she said.

Although the 48,000-square-foot project has already been approved by the North Hempstead Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals, the town board has to approve the site plan before work can begin. The board reserved decision Tuesday and will likely vote on the project during its next regular meeting July 17, said town spokesman Tim McBride.

A team of McDonald's consultants at the hearing sought to allay residents' concerns about noise and traffic flow using numerous diagrams and architectural plans which detailed, among other things, a four-foot b[illegible] wall along the drive-through lane to deflect car noise, a thick buffer of landscaping to absorb sound, and a six-foot wooden fence to keep the restaurant out of sight of neighbors.

"There should not be much deterioration in sound quality because of the mitigating measures," said Jeremy Litt, a landscaping consultant for McDonald's.

However, residents, concerned that even the best laid plans will not lessen the impact of increased traffic and noise, asked board members to reject the drive-through portion of the proposal.

But that is not one of the board's options, said Peter Mineo, the attorney representing McDonald's.

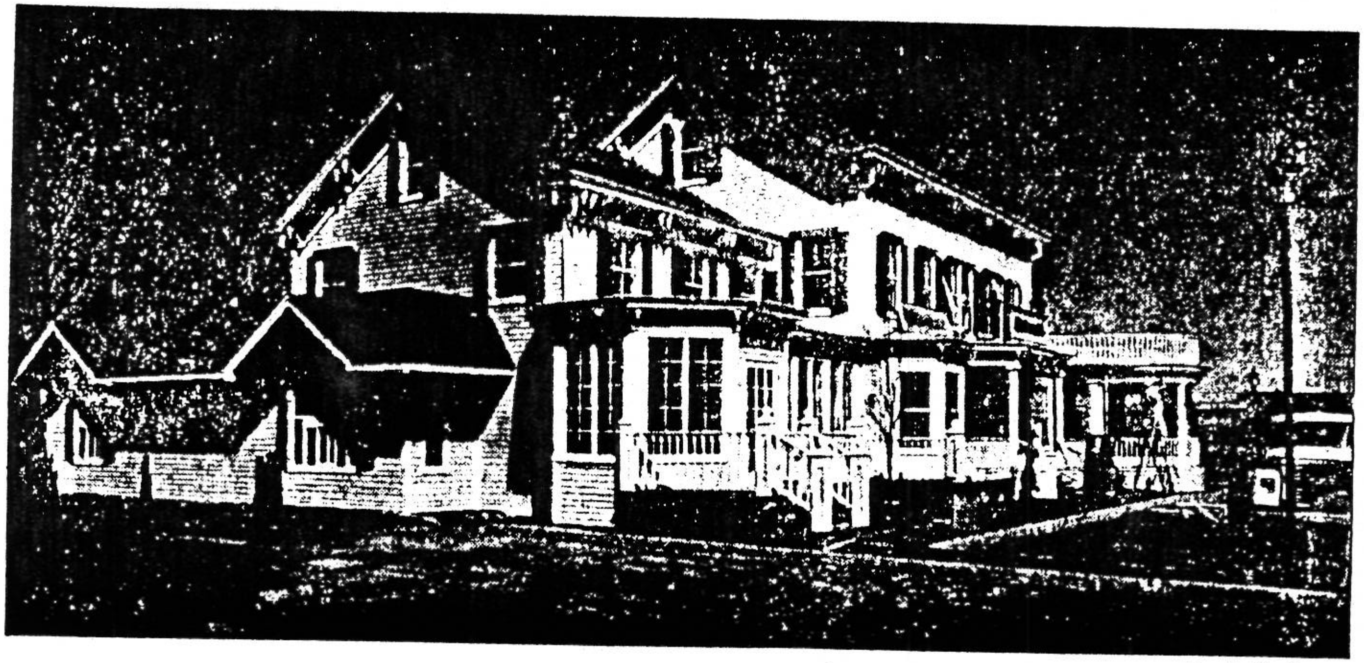
Mineo reminded the board during the hearing that it does not have the power to veto the plans already approved by the landmark commission and the zoning board.

While it is unlikely that the board will reject the site plan altogether, McBride said board members could hinge their approval on certain conditions. No conditions were imposed Tuesday.

The white, clapboard structure, which has been dated to the 1860s or '70s, has been operated as a restaurant since the 1940s.

When McDonald's purchased the property in September, 1986, officials initially planned to raze the building and erect a typical McDonald's. However, the designation of the site as a historic landmark in January, 1988, spurred McDonald's officials to pursue restoration of the building.

And in This Farmhouse They Serve Big Macs



Newsday/Ken Spencer

McDonald's opens a restaurant today in The Denton House, an 1860 farmhouse in New Hyde Park.

By Joan Reminick

ON WHAT IS one of the dreariest, most congested, most industrial-looking stretches of Jericho Turnpike in Nassau County, the pristine white Victorian farmhouse with bright green shutters seems wildly out of place. But it's the signpost at the driveway's entrance that provides the real shock: This, the golden arches proclaim, is your local McDonald's.

The Denton House at 2045 Jericho Tpke., New Hyde Park, a circa-1860 landmark building the McDonald's Corp. bought in 1986, opens to the public today. Although McDonald's originally intended to raze the place and build a conventional fast-food outlet, a community outcry resulted in the town declaring the house a landmark. So McDonald's decided to restore it, and make it its 12,000th restaurant.

"When we took over this building, it was a disaster, a real eyesore," said Paul Facella, New York regional vice president for McDonald's. "There were pigeons all over. We had to gut the building, take it down to the rafters."

The restoration ended up costing $4 million, roughly twice the amount anticipated. Still, said Larry Anderer, who, with his wife, Joan, owns the franchise, "it ended up a win-win-win situation; the restoration of a historical building was a great thing for the community; McDonald's got access to a terrific trade area, and my wife and I are thrilled to be here."

The building's exterior was reproduced to replicate a 1920 photo. One of the upstairs windows is an original; the rest are duplicates. External trim, ornate and gingerbread-like, was copied from templates made from the originals; exact copies of the five original chimneys were built.

The inside was gutted and redesigned: instead of a warren of boxlike rooms, a grand entryway with an imposing double staircase was designed, creating a gallery effect. On one end, the original portico was enclosed in glass, creating a "garden room." Unfortunately, the view happens to be of the parking lot and the auto collision shop across the street.

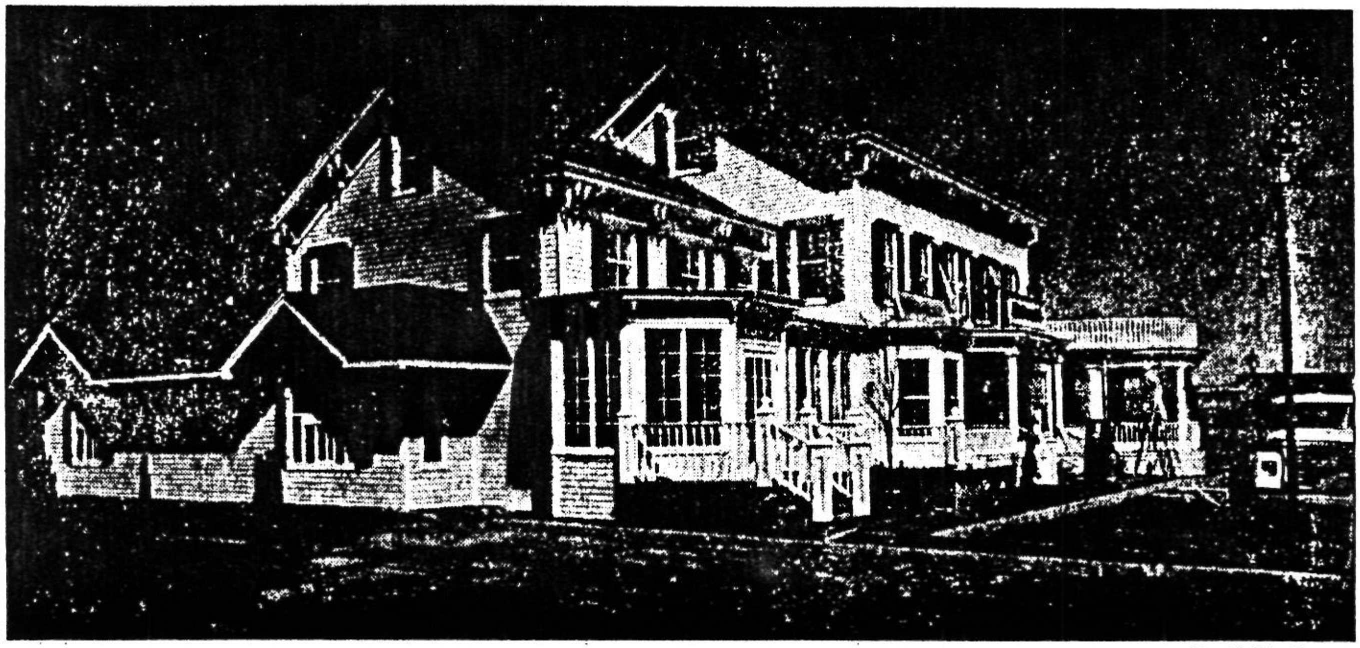
Inside, a thoroughly modern food-service area was put in with state-of-the art equipment, including a soda dispenser that automatically fills cups as soon as an order is punched into the register. Upstairs is a nifty party room that's done up as an old-fashioned soda fountain — a counter with stools, a twilight blue, star-studded ceiling nook overhead, Ronald McDonald and Mac Tonight (a character with a giant crescent moon for a head) reclining inside.

This is not, however, the first time McDonald's has veered from the standard Formica-inspired design. In the past few years, they've opened, among other places, a riverboat in St. Louis, an upscale spot in Manhattan's Wall Street area, complete with classical pianist, and a McDonald's in downtown Chicago with a '50s theme.

So here's the question: given all this ambiance, is the food any different from the usual McDonald's fare?

I tasted a Quarter Pounder with cheese and some fries and found that while it's nice to be eating in a place with wonderful little nooks, dandy architectural details and a whole lot of history, the food here is exactly the same as in any other McDonald's — the cheeseburger tastes mainly of pickle, and the fries are thin, hot and crisp. But I did find something I'd never realized before: a Quarter Pounder with cheese is a potent memory-trigger. It sent me back to the noisy play-group lunches when my two children were toddlers, the times we stopped off the Interstate for a quick bite. Perhaps my next Interstate burger will transport me to a cathedral-ceilinged room with brass sconces and period-reproduction floral wallpaper. /■

And in This Farmhouse They Serve Big Macs



Newsday/Ken Spencer

McDonald's opens a restaurant today in The Denton House, an 1860 farmhouse in New Hyde Park.

By Joan Reminick

ON WHAT IS one of the dreariest, most congested, most industrial-looking stretches of Jericho Turnpike in Nassau County, the pristine white Victorian farmhouse with bright green shutters seems wildly out of place. But it's the signpost at the driveway's entrance that provides the real shock: This, the golden arches proclaim, is your local McDonald's.

The Denton House at 2045 Jericho Tpke., New Hyde Park, a circa-1860 landmark building the McDonald's Corp. bought in 1986, opens to the public today. Although McDonald's originally intended to raze the place and build a conventional fast-food outlet, a community outcry resulted in the town declaring the house a landmark. So McDonald's decided to restore it, and make it its 12,000th restaurant.

"When we took over this building, it was a disaster, a real eyesore," said Paul Facella, New York regional vice president for McDonald's. "There were pigeons all over. We had to gut the building, take it down to the rafters."

The restoration ended up costing $4 million, roughly twice the amount anticipated. Still, said Larry Anderer, who, with his wife, Joan, owns the franchise, "it ended up a win-win-win situation; the restoration of a historical building was a great thing for the community; McDonald's got access to a terrific trade area, and my wife and I are thrilled to be here."

The building's exterior was reproduced to replicate a 1920 photo. One of the upstairs windows is an original; the rest are duplicates. External trim, ornate and gingerbread-like, was copied from templates made from the originals; exact copies of the five original chimneys were built.

The inside was gutted and redesigned; instead of a warren of boxlike rooms, a grand entryway with an imposing double staircase was designed, creating a gallery effect. On one end, the original portico was enclosed in glass, creating a "garden room." Unfortunately, the view happens to be of the parking lot and the auto collision shop across the street.

Inside, a thoroughly modern food-service area was put in with state-of-the art equipment, including a soda dispenser that automatically fills cups as soon as an order is punched into the register. Upstairs is a nifty party room that's done up as an old-fashioned soda fountain — a counter with stools, a twilight blue, star-studded ceiling nook overhead, Ronald McDonald and Mac Tonight (a character with a giant crescent moon for a head) reclining inside.

This is not, however, the first time McDonald's has veered from the standard Formica-inspired design. In the past few years, they've opened, among other places, a riverboat in St. Louis, an upscale spot in Manhattan's Wall Street area, complete with classical pianist, and a McDonald's in downtown Chicago with a '50s theme.

So here's the question: given all this ambiance, is the food any different from the usual McDonald's fare?

I tasted a Quarter Pounder with cheese and some fries and found that while it's nice to be eating in a place with wonderful little nooks, dandy architectural details and a whole lot of history, the food here is exactly the same as in any other McDonald's — the cheeseburger tastes mainly of pickle, and the fries are thin, hot and crisp. But I did find something I'd never realized before: a Quarter Pounder with cheese is a potent memory-trigger. It sent me back to the noisy play-group lunches when my two children were toddlers, the times we stopped off the Interstate for a quick bite. Perhaps my next Interstate burger will transport me to a cathedral-ceilinged room with brass sconces and period-reproduction floral wallpaper. /■

12,000 and Historical, Too

The first sign that you are approaching a landmark is the traffic. The right lane of Jericho Turnpike has stopped. Not because of a traffic accident or a traffic light, but because dozens of cars are trying to turn into the already full parking lot of Long Island's newest landmark, the McDonald's restaurant in New Hyde Park.

A 19th-century homestead has been converted into the 12,000th McDonald's, and the combination of hamburgers and history is bringing out the crowds. **Tony Coroneos,** 16, of New Hyde Park, usually makes French fries, but last weekend the young employee was directing traffic.

The owner, **Larry Anderer Jr.,** soon joined him. It did not help. Cars went round and round with no place to stop.

"The problem is our drive-through percentage is way down, because everyone wants to come in," said **Paul Facella,** a regional manager. In between dodging cars, Mr. Facella explained how the exterior of the former Denton House had been restored to its original splendor as per the requirements of the North Hempstead Historical Commission. Inside, space has been set aside for a town museum.

When Mr. Facella purchased the Denton property six years ago, he thought he had simply an "old derelict building," he said. The town thought differently. "They said they wanted it to be a historical landmark," he recalled. Four million dollars later, that is what it is.

The outside of the large white house has been restored to the way it was in the 1800's. Inside along with the Big Macs and Filet-o-Fishes, there are walls of ash wood, terrazzo floors, a garden room and dual staircases leading up to additional eating space. The inside is all new, but few realize that.

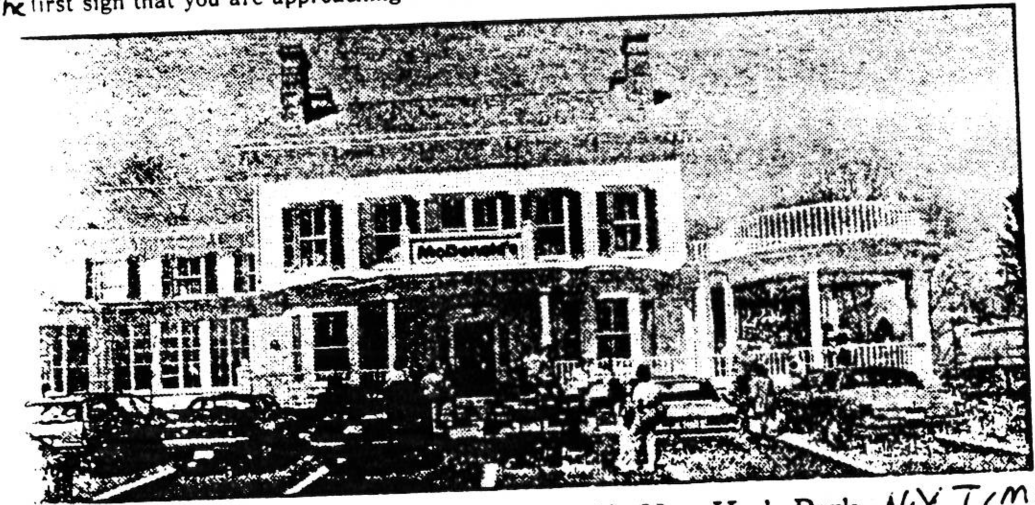
"Why I can just see the old days when women in long gowns walked down those staircases," said **Laura Joss Graff** of Stony Brook, lunching with her son, **B. J.,** and her parents, **Magda** and **Evere** **Joss,** of Manhasset Hills.

"It's like walking into a museum," said **Pa** **Damato,** who works in a law office in Mineola. M Damato was visiting to look, not to eat. "I'm history buff," he said. "I wanted to see it."

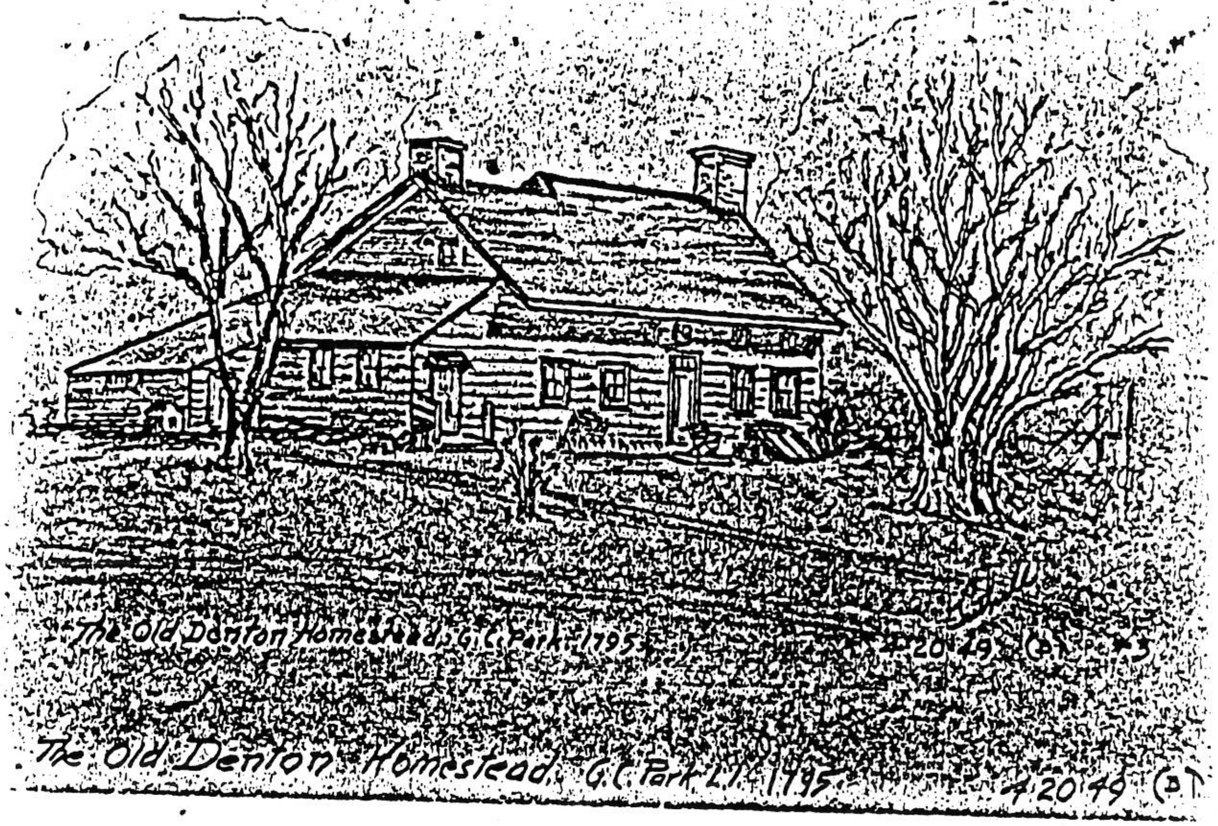
Curiosity has not attracted nearby neighbo who say they are aghast at the crowds parking their streets and the annoying smell of Fren fries. "The smell is disgusting," **Maryla Skibic** said. "Cars park all over, and the teen-agers a starting to hang out here and throw garbage on t lawn."

Mr. Anderer, who owns the McDonald's alo with his wife, **Joan,** said he hoped that once t opening rush quieted down, so would the neighbo He would like his "historic treasure" to be cons ered "upscale."

"I eventually want to put tablecloths and lit battery-operated candles on the tables on Fric and Saturday nights," he said, "so young peo can come here on dates."



The new McDonald's in a landmark homstead in New Hyde Park. N.Y. TIMES 4/7/91


The Old Denton Homestead. G.C. Park 1795
4 20 49
The Old Denton Homestead. G.C. Park L.I. 1795
4 20 49 (D.T

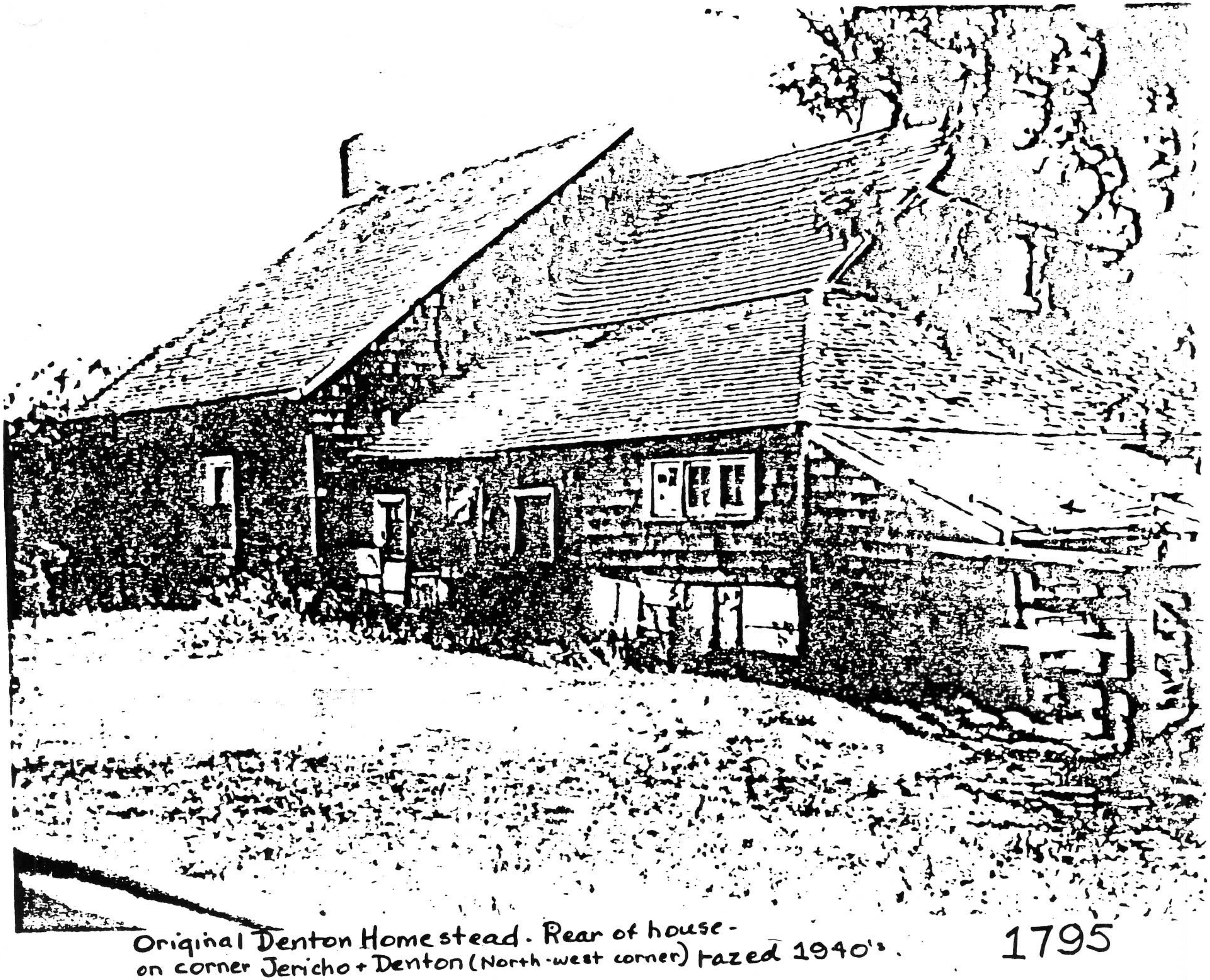
New Hyde Park (NASSAU COUNTY. HOUSES) 19

Drawn by Cuyler Tuthill

4/20/49

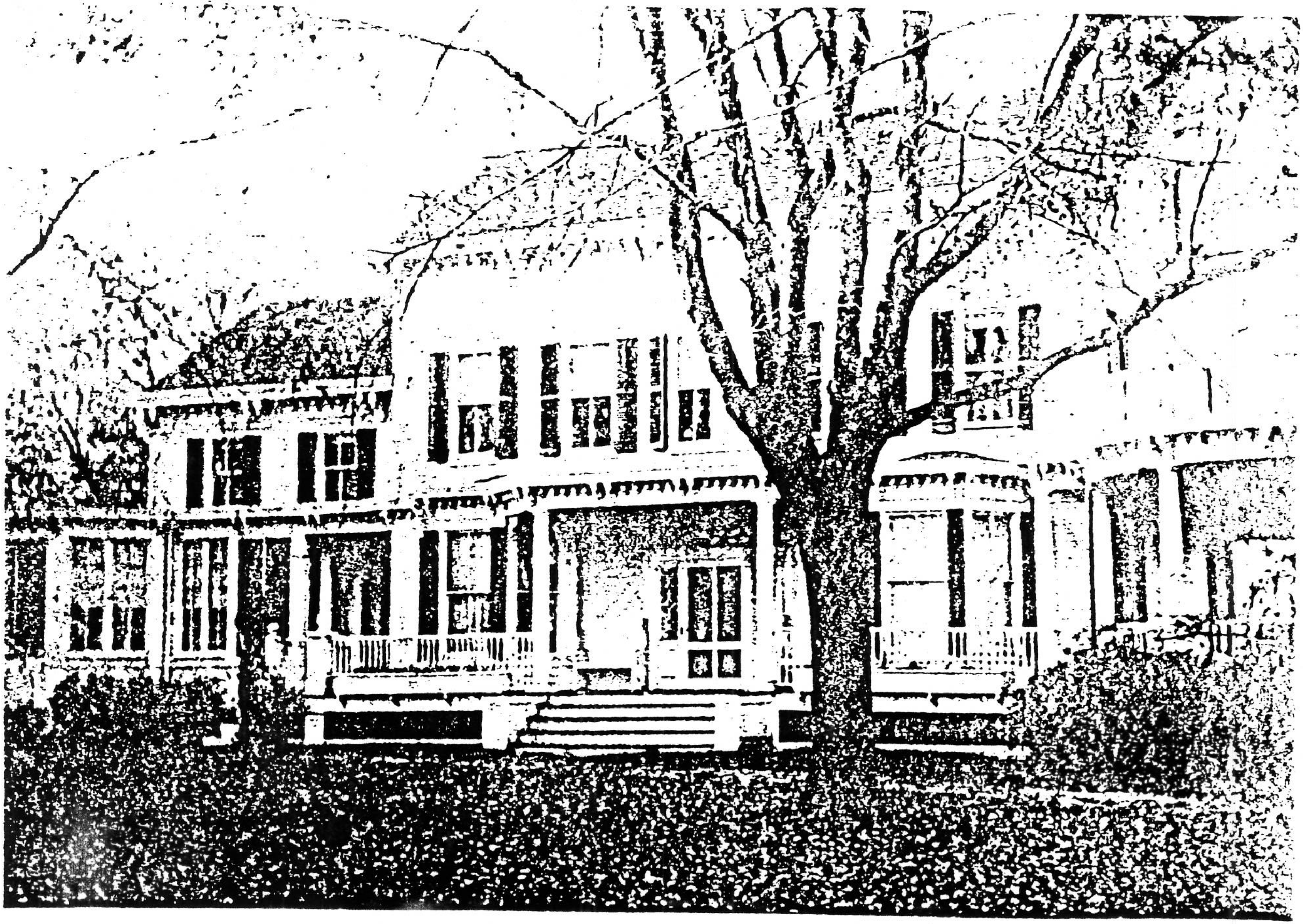
Dap.

1979.3.3

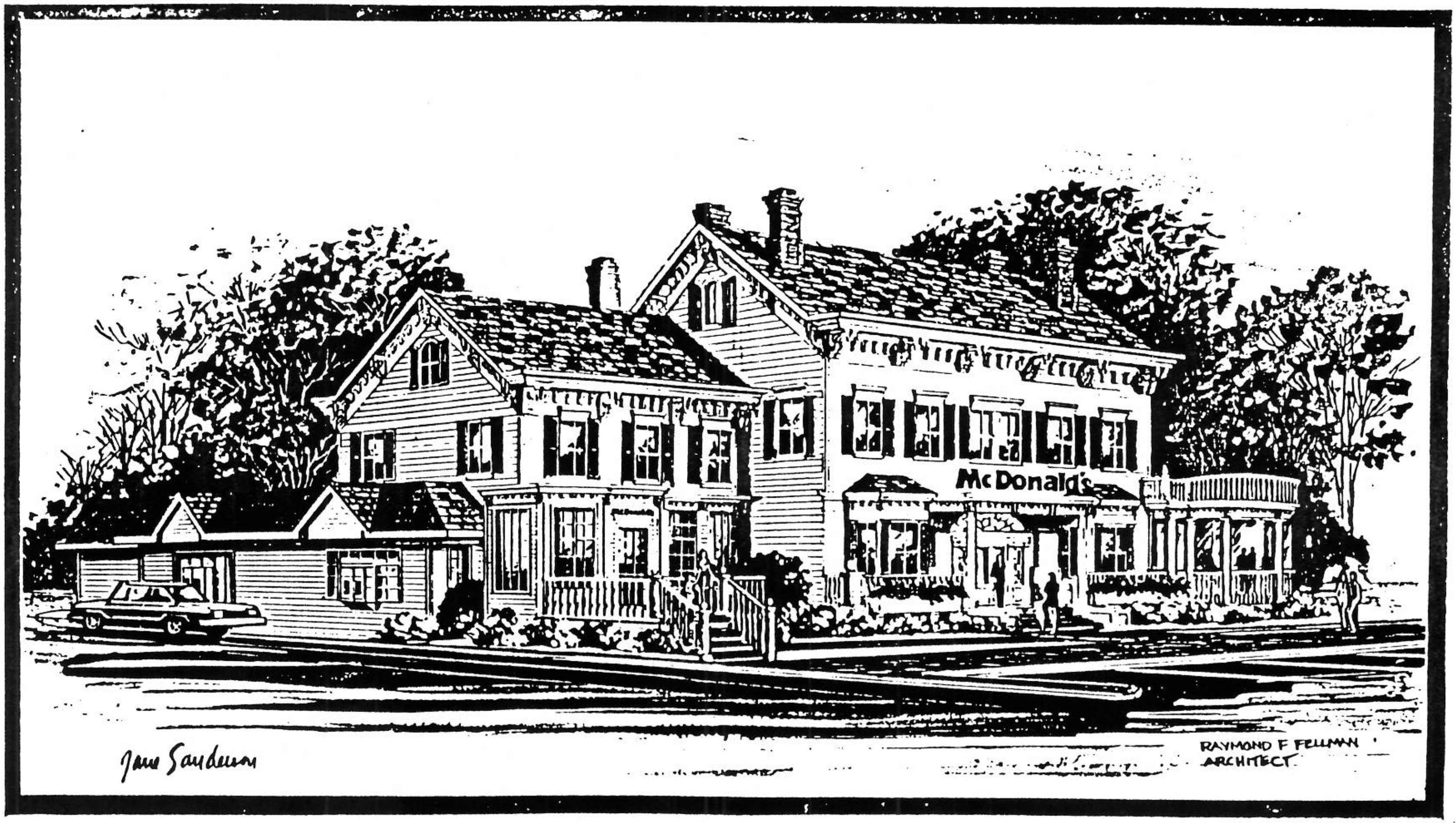


Original Denton Homestead. Rear of house-
on corner Jericho + Denton (North-west corner) razed 1940's.

1795



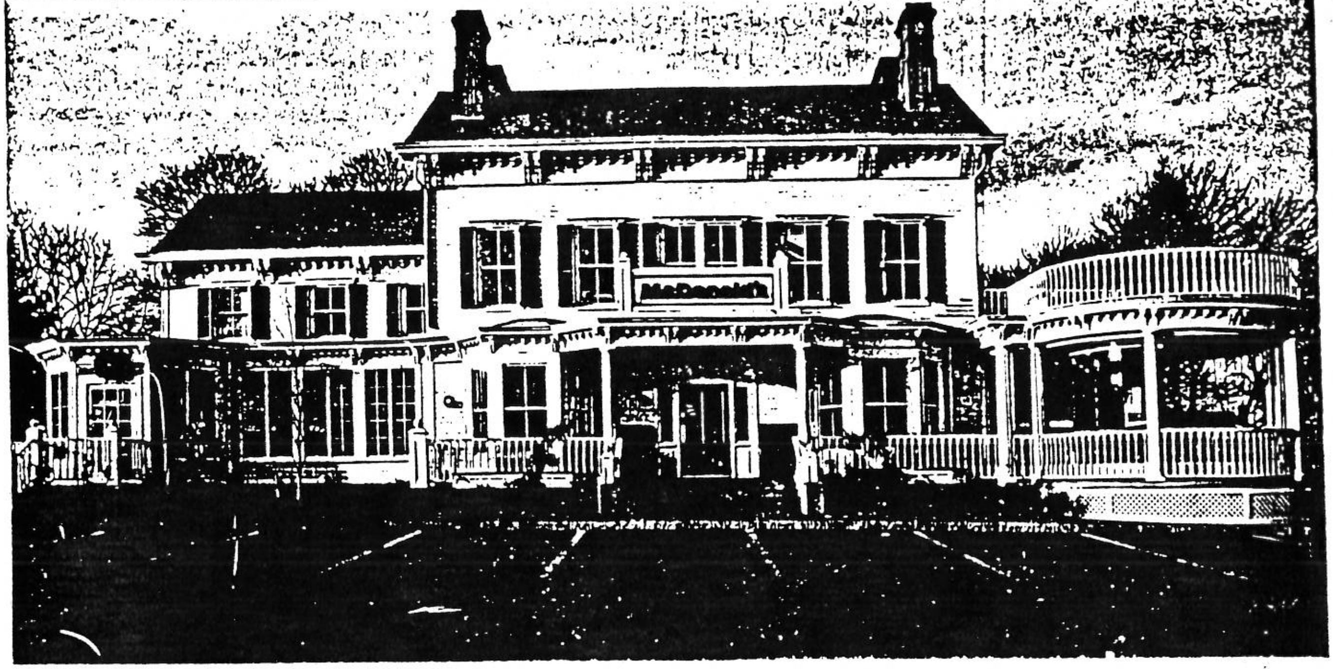
Denton House 1926



McDonald's
Jane Sanderson
RAYMOND F FELLMAN
ARCHITECT

PROPOSED HISTORICAL RESTORATION
FOR
THE McDONALD'S CORPORATION
NEW HYDE PARK, NEW YORK

HISTORIC
PRESERVATION
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION ▼ MAY/JUNE 1992



McHeritage

Not many fast-food restaurants have patrons who claim to have once lived on the premises, and it is a rare prospective bride who wants to have her bridal portrait taken on the stairs to a McDonald's dining mezzanine. But then the McDonald's in New Hyde Park, New York, is in some ways exceptional. Yes, the ubiquitous Big Macs and immutable McNuggets are here defrosted, fried, assembled, and delivered with the familiar dispatch, and yes, the 140-seat interior exhibits the predictable McDonald's themes. But patrons of this restaurant, located along Long Island's Jericho Turnpike, dine within the shell of a circa 1860 house.

The original owners reportedly were descendants of Richard Denton, a Presbyterian minister who arrived in the New World in 1630 and helped to found the village of Hempstead in 1643. Another Denton, Augustus, was a Nassau County politician at the turn of the century. After World War II the house was no longer inhabited by Dentons and became first one and then another restaurant. It was the son of one of these restaurateurs who claimed to have occupied the upstairs.

When McDonald's acquired the Denton property in 1985, says Lawrence J. Anderer, Jr., the current owner/operator, the company intended to demolish the then dilapidated house and build one of its standard eateries. But residents of the village of New Hyde Park and the Town of North Hempstead obtained local historic designation and struck an agreement whereby McDonald's would restore the structure's exterior to its appearance in a 1926 photograph—with an allowance for a low-profile, single-story addition to the rear.

McDonald's doesn't keep track of how many of its restaurants are in buildings designated historic, but it does claim this to be its 12,000th to open. And that, of course, is history. ▼

Photograph By James Scott